431, 796

/For information on the potlatch as a means of gaining prestige and a description of the ceremonies, see category 556./

● 796
765

/For information on the details of the memorial potlatch ceremonies for the dead, see category 769./

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when I was working. Before I left, this medley convinced so much Bella Coola that it was unintelligible to white people who knew Chinook alone.

Activities in the ceremonies would have interfered seriously with my work during the summer of 1922 if two men had not been confined to the village, Captain Schooner owing to an injured wrist, and Jim Pollard by the illness of his wife. These two men were willing to work half a day apiece without pecuniary. Each was intensely proud of the traditions of his people and, realizing that their culture was passing away, was glad to assist in making it permanent in writing. An intimacy sprang up between Captain Schooner (see Plate 3) and myself culminating in my adoption, a circumstance which established and improved my position in the community. In this way I was enabled to collect a large amount of material before July when it was necessary for me to leave for the east.

In September, 1923, when I returned to Bella Coola, I found that Captain Schooner had died a few months before, respected alike by white men and Indians. With the aid of others with whom I had made contact it was possible to obtain much new information, as well as to clear up many obscure points. The previous summer I had been so overwhelmed with material that I had no time to collate it in the field and the gaps only become apparent after a year's study. The men were so busy hunting and laying in stocks of fire-wood, however, that I found it difficult to arrange regular hours of work, but this was a trifle compared with the initial difficulties of my first trip. In October, when the Bella Coola began to prepare for the winter dances, they had to appoint a successor to Captain Schooner, who had played a leading part in their production. Having been adopted by him, it was suggested that I take his place, a proposition which I readily accepted. This admitted me to the circle of the old men, and I imagine that my interest encouraged them to hold more ceremonials than they had done for several years. In former times, a number of the older men used to devote much time and thought to the composing, re-

S:\McDermith B-1 (2512-2514)\948
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numbering, and ordering of songs; in 1913 it was found that Jim Pollard (see Plate a) alone had a sufficiently accurate memory to act as announcer. As more and more men wished to perform, he found himself unable to keep the men in order, and asked me to join the choir as prompter. I held this position for the rest of the winter, taking a full part in every ceremony. Although the old customs had broken down enormously, this actual participation enabled me to understand the winter dances in a manner impossible from mere description. Later on, phonographic records were made of many of the songs sung, thus preserving specimens of the fast disappearing music.

My intimate association with the Bella Coola enabled me to collect the material here presented which, having been verified and recorded, I have every reason to believe is correct. Nevertheless, it has one serious defect owing to the lack of systems of my own. I found it almost impossible to differentiate certain sounds; in fact, I sometimes recorded the same word with different spellings. Consequently, I cannot guarantee the accuracy of the native terms used in this monograph. Moreover, I was entirely unable to analyze proper names, which would have been of great value in understanding the attributes of supernatural beings.

When writing up field notes, the realization of my own inefficiency in the recording of sounds tempted me to rely upon the spelling of Boas whenever possible. After considerable hesitation, I rejected this course for the following reason. Ethnological work falls into two categories, descriptive and comparative. This monograph is of the former type, based on actual work in the field and the inclusion of any material from another source would destroy its originality. I believe that a descriptive work should consist exclusively of the author's own research, and I have adhered to this principle in spite of the advantages which would have followed the use of Boas' linguistic terms. For the same reason no attempt has been made to compare the customs and beliefs of the Bella Coola with those of other tribes, although this would undoubtedly have shed

from *Snukk*. My informant's grandchildren regard themselves as *Snukk* boys, and their names are embodied in myths of that village, although their fathers have not lived there for five generations. There is no reason to suppose this case exceptional. Other instances were obtained of movements of people from one village to another at earlier times, and there seems no reason to doubt the general accuracy of them. Names embodied in the origin myths of different towns are used as pronguiyus and have been potent factors in keeping their memory alive. Uncertainties and inaccuracies there must be in the foregoing list, but on the whole it appears to be fairly reliable, since few contradictions were received from different informants.

Answers obtained of the same enumerator from the descendants of people of different villages were found in most cases to be identical. There were a few differences in custom between the people of *Nuxa* and those of the other upper valley towns on the one hand, and the inhabitants of the lower valley on the other. These will be mentioned when necessary, but on the whole the inhabitants of the Bella Coola valley can be considered as a tribal unity.

Boas (p. 38) gives a list of Bella Coola towns which agrees fairly well with the above. Among his villages are included *Pe-ouk* (no. 2), *Pelkpelkmax* (no. 7), and *Pecdlem* (no. 16).* All the other people agreed that these are the names of streams, though settlements located on them may have been known by the same designations. Names of the five villages recorded by Boas, nos. 4, 5, 9, 13, and 14, were not known by several old men questioned on the subject.

The villages of the Bella Coola valley did not form a political unit; each was independent. A common language was spoken throughout and the inhabitants of the different towns recognized their their origins and customs were similar. This was also recognized to be the case with regard to the people living on South Bentinck Arm, and on the head of Dean Channel.

*Kimsquit is not now the spelling of this name.

tribes. This differentiated them clearly from all neighboring tribes.

B. Consequences. A member of a secret society in any of the above towns was accepted as a member in any other one. A person of another tribe, even if known to belong to a corresponding society, was treated as an uninitiated person.

C. Claims and Reasons. The people of Bella Coola, Dei'en, and Kimsquit felt themselves to be alike through acceptance of the fact that their ancestors had been created together in the beginning of time. This marked them off with great clearness from all other tribes, especially from the Carriers of the interior. This belief formed a sentimental and religious bond of great strength.

Neighboring Tribes

It is desirable to describe, briefly, the tribes with which the Bella Coola came in contact.

The Carriers

East of Bella Coola, amid the mountains of the interior, dwell the Carriers. In summer they often came down to the river valley to fish or trade for salmon, and in winter they were sometimes forced by cold and starvation again to visit the Bella Coola, Bella Bella, or Rivers Inlet people. There was a good deal of intermarriage between them and the inhabitants of the upper valley, so that the wanderers were able to speak the mild tongue with relatives. Since the law, the Bella Coola considered these people nearly foreign to Indian soil beliefs, and to call a man a "Carrier" was, and still is, a deadly insult. The Carriers lacked the rich ceremonial life of the coastal people who, therefore, regarded them with scorn and contempt. The presence of a few of the south-dwelling Carriers was, however, almost necessary to the correct performance of the winter dances since they were considered spectators whom it was necessary to impress and delude.

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from the moon and stated that there were mountains and snow on it. It is commonly stated that the marks on the moon represent a man carrying a basket.

The stars figure but slightly either in Bella Coola mythology or thought; it is not even known who made them. Two in the Great Bear constellation are called respectively *Tpikste* and *Xoxpaus*, "Little Girls." A lone star in the same part of the sky, named *K'ôos*, is said to be following the girls to the forest for illicit intercourse.

Moon, stars, and above all the sun, were, and still are to a certain extent, used by the Bella Coola in computing the passage of time. There are no individuals with the definite prerogative of keeping count of time, but formerly wise old men used to do so.[1] Differences of opinion were the rule rather than the exception, a condition which often led to bitter disputes concerning the proper date for starting the winter ceremonials. Boas (p. 41) has recorded the Bella Coola calendar in greater detail than the present writer has been able to do. The making of calendrical observations is a lost art, and the following list of the months was all that could be learned. It will be noted that these agree with Boas in regard to the months in the early part of the year, but not in those between the summer and winter solstices; no explanation is offered for this disparity.

First moon after the summer solstice: *Xhâlaxwiat*, which has the significance, "The Time for Sockeye Salmon to Ascend the River."

Second moon after the summer solstice: *Xl'ichalôl*, "The Time for Eating Dog Salmon."

Third moon after the summer solstice: *Xl'ewaî-ut*, "The Time for Eating Cohoe Salmon."

Fourth moon after the summer solstice: *Xpâlpum*, "The Time for Gathering Fern Roots," or *Xlokstaxw-ût Xwa'Gtwaîxwlaîx*,

[1] Klamquît's informants stated that there were professional calendrical experts in his home, when he was a young lad although members of the feather society (Kl. chap. 4) sometimes attended to this matter.

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621
establish himself with the traditions of his new home. This [614]
is another illustration of the patrilineal tendency of the whole [553]
organization.

Politically, the village is the most important Bella Coola unit. Usually, though not always related to one another, the inhabitants are always friends. If an attack is made on a village by a hostile war-party, all the inhabitants suffer equally. On the other hand, if the residents decide to attack another [628] settlement, there is no compulsion for anyone to share the burden. Each individual, with the exception of slaves, follows his own inclination. In the case of murder or other wrong [629] inflicted by an individual, the responsibility rests on his immediate family, not the village. Factions within the village seem [575] to have been unimportant; individual jealousies were common, and often led to murder, but if a family became unpopular or [621] considered itself aggrieved, it usually moved to another village. Neighbouring settlements were generally on friendly terms and [628] often assisted each other in war, but this was not compulsory. Indeed, cases are known in which a war-party from the outer coast, about to attack *Ilawd*, passed within a quarter of a mile of *Qumqu'ts* without its inhabitants even warning their threatened neighbours.

As far as internal organization is concerned, the village is as fluid a unit as are most Bella Coola groupings. If one indi- 622
vidual has attained a position of eminence through the potlatch 554
system (vol. I, chap. IV), he is "chief" of the village, and his [536]
advice is generally followed. If several men have approximately the same importance, there is no dominating figure. In any case, a chief lacks executive authority, and such obedience as he receives is due to his personal influence. Some slight deference is paid to the man who uses the name of the eldest of the first group of settlers, the first chief, but this is not sufficient to warrant the title of "chief" with the significance usually attached to the term. The important members of the village 621
are summoned to meet for the discussion of ceremonial mat- 623
535
192.

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sure, and the village constitutes a unit for all dances; in fact this ceremonial unity is its most important function.

With the exception of a few villages built on the seashore, each Bella Coola settlement consists of a row of houses on the river bank. These are of the usual rectangular, plank-built type typical of the North-West Coast. In front of them stretches a sidewalk, usually supported by piles on the side nearest the river to make it level. The houses, too, in many cases have piles beneath their front ends, made necessary by the steep slope of the bank. In large villages there may be two rows of houses, behind and above one another. Usually there is a rough path parallel to the row of houses at the very edge of the river. The number of houses varies; before the smallpox epidemic some villages contained as many as thirty or forty, others, only two or three. There is no definite arrangement of the houses; anyone may build where there is a vacant space. Much the same arrangement occurs in the sea-coast villages, each of which depends for its main sustenance on an ocean fish-trap, as the river villages depend on a salmon-weir.

The central part of each house is occupied by a large fire, often sunk a considerable distance below the level of the floor, and around this is an open space free to all. Toward the sidewalls are raised the partitions, forming bedrooms for the different families, or for different members of one. In many cases the flooring is removed in three or four parts of the house for small fires on which different groups cook, the central fire being used for heating and for more important meals. The number of families occupying a house depends on its size; an important chief, with many relatives, often builds an enormous house which is occupied by ten or more families; smaller houses contain only two or three. Life in the larger houses is free and open; people are constantly passing in and out, and anyone present when food is being distributed is given a share as a matter of course. Most of the houses are decorated with carved upright posts and paintings on the beams and back-wall. A door through the latter leads to the back-room, so important in dances.

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Although guests from different tribes are sometimes invited to other ceremonials, it is at potlatches that they are essential. Since the validity of such transactions as marriages, divorces, or the assumption of professional prerogatives depends on the presence of witnesses, and since the importance of such a rite depends on the number of witnesses, a man is always eager to carry out any public performance at a potlatch when he is sure of the attention of foreigners, and the consequent wider diffusion of knowledge of what he has done. The man who has invited guests is usually willing to allow others to perform at his potlatch, since it increases the complexity and importance of the affair. It follows that no two potlatches are alike; one will contain features entirely lacking in another. Moreover, the wealth of the donor determines how many rites he himself will cause to be performed. The fundamental concept of the potlatch is the inviting of guests from abroad to witness rites in connection with an ancestral myth, especially the return of a recently deceased relative of the donor to visit the living.

At any important potlatch the following rites are carried out, and in the account of the ritual it will be assumed that these alone are taking place. If the reader bears this summary in mind, he is less likely to be confused by the complication of rites.

(1) The return of a dead ancestor to visit the living.

(2) The initiation of young men or women into the *nusuit* society. This includes the validation of a *nusuit* name for each, and a period of seclusion in the back-room. The initiates may either be relatives of the donor of the potlatch, or young persons whose relatives are taking the opportunity to carry out the rite in the presence of foreigners. Some of the initiates may already be members of the society, undergoing a further period of seclusion in order to increase their status by a further distribution of presents.

(3) The payment by the wife of the donor and her family of goods to "rebuy" her from her husband. This is a legal fiction, though necessary to maintain the status of the children.

1:McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924)1948
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(4) The strengthening of the donor's seat. 556*

(5) The strengthening, or initial establishment, of seats for 796 ●
a number of young relatives of the donor who may, or may not, be those who are being initiated into the *nusk̓* society. Other youths may also be established on seats by their relatives.

The duration of a potlatch varies with the number of rites being performed. The preliminaries, including the beginning of seclusion for *nusk̓* initiates, requires at least several weeks, in some cases months. There is further delay of a week or more after the arrival of the first guests, as only when the last party has arrived can the actual potlatch begin. This can then be completed in three days and nights, although if many initiates are performing their *nusk̓* dances, a longer time is required.

What are the consequences of giving a potlatch?

In the first place the donor spreads the fame of his name 556*
far and wide, also the myth with which it is incorporated. Thus he increases the renown of his ancestors, a source of intense pride and gratification.

More important even than this, it elevates the donor himself. With the proper carrying out of the complicated ritual [156]
and the knowledge that his name is now known among different tribes, a man experiences a feeling of mental superiority which enables him to take a leading part in the affairs of his community. In Bella Coola a chief (*stâlumɛ*) is a person whose 556*
influence is paramount owing to his success in giving pot- 622
latches.* If several chiefs in one village have given potlatches, [554]
he who has given most is generally of greatest importance, although often a man of forceful character who has held, for example, five potlatches will be regarded with greater respect than one of lesser weight, even if he has given six. The whole [182]
system is exceedingly fluid, as might be expected where chieftainship depends on individual prowess. In theory, the man who holds the name of the first person to occupy a village, at

*Particularly if he has given four potlatches and can accordingly be described as a *nusk̓ chief* (I, p. 173). In *nusk̓* songs the archaic word *ɛlkumamɛ* is also sometimes employed for "chief."

1:McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924)1948
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ability are always seeking to lend goods to those who are planning potlatches or other rites, knowing that the investment is safe and lucrative.

X uses his own discretion as to how much wealth is necessary. He knows how much he owes for presents received on previous occasions, and would not dream of giving a potlatch until able to repay these. Failure to do so would hold him up to the derision of the whole countryside. But he acts upon his own judgment with regard to interest. If he continues to hoard goods until he is able to repay with great increase, he gains prestige from his generous returns, but meanwhile he does not enjoy the distinction which would have followed a smaller affair at an earlier period. Further, there is the uncertainty about how much his wife's family will contribute, though that can be estimated with a fair degree of accuracy; in Bella Coola every transaction is made publicly, so each man knows the wealth of his neighbour. The favourite month for a potlatch is October, before the *kusiut* dances, when there is abundance of food. At this season there is plenty of salmon roe, berries, and crabapples, all of which might be ruined by frost. Occasionally, a potlatch takes place after the *kusiut* period, but in that case the only foods available are olachen grease, smoked meat, smoked fish, dried hemlock-bark, and dried berries. If several men in one village decide to give potlatches in the same year there may be rivalry and dispute as to which shall be first. There is no satisfactory method of settling this point.

When all is ready X tells a herald (I, p. 244) to summon his fellow villagers to his house the following day for *xläxtnim*. It is customary for all to accept, but no social obligation is broken should a man or woman fail to do so.

The next morning no one eats in his own house, knowing that free food will be distributed. While his expected guests are adorning themselves by washing and painting, X, aided by his family and others, prepares large quantities of food, borrows boxes, and makes other necessary arrangements. Pre-

McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924) 1948
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whiskers over which is scattered eagle down. From the back of the head-dress hang weasel skins. In Bella Bella it is said to be customary for a skin to be added on every occasion when a *nusuit* is confined to the back-room. This may happen as many as fifteen times to the child of wealthy parents, and a few Bella Coola have adopted the practice of marking each with a skin. Usually, some six or nine are hung in two tiers, without consideration of the number of times the wearer has been in seclusion. The central figure of the forehead mask is a head with a hooked nose, the recurved hook being joined to the face itself. This figure does not vary with the wearer's ancestral myth, and no one knows what it represents. This design is said to have been introduced to Bella Coola from the north a few generations ago; before that time the head-dress consisted of a circular band of dyed cedar-bark, decorated with the tail feathers of one of the large woodpeckers. The Bella Coola call it simply, "forehead mask." Each initiate carries a hollow rattle, carved in the shape of a bird, which he holds in his right hand, belly uppermost. Long, long ago, when a dancer failed to do so, the rattle became alive and the bird flew away; hence, this rule has been obeyed ever since.

Each initiate takes up his station in some part of the house behind the fire and dances to the beating of the sticks. The left hand of each is clasped behind his back and in his right he holds the rattle and keeps it in constant motion by shaking his wrist. Ability to do this is one of the marks of a good dancer. Keeping the body stiff and the legs close together, he rises with slight jumps, barely altering his position on the floor. Sometimes he slowly turns around sunwise[1] in his series of jumps, at other times he does not alter his position. The head is bent from side to side and downwards at each jump, causing the eagle down to fly in all directions. *Susuit* assistants blow more of the material on to the head-dress at intervals (see Plate 16).

[1] The Bella Coola believe that the sun moves from east to south to west to north. Many ceremonial movements follow this direction, which will henceforth be described as sunwise.

[See cat 116, facing p 219 - ANALYST]

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203 553 552 614 [424] services. None the less, one of their prized prerogatives, the visible embodiment of an element in their ancestral myth, is no longer present. In such circumstances, no member of an ancestral family would give a potlatch unless able to revive at it the dormant name in a new herald. The intending donor usually consults with the senior members of the ancestral family as to a suitable incumbent, or especially if he is an influential chief, he may simply use his own discretion. In either case, some relatively young member of the ancestral family is offered the post. If he accepts, the matter is settled; if not, another is invited in his stead. The new herald cannot function until his name and appointment have been validated by the distribution of presents at the potlatch. Such gifts are not returnable, since they are held to "have become nothing" for the name. Relatively lavish expenditure for this purpose is one of the many ways in which a chief is able to show his prowess and generosity. Thus established, a herald can carry out his duties thenceforth. He functions at every ceremonial, but especially at potlatches given by members of his own ancestral family, in whose origin myth his own name is embodied. From constant participation in all kinds of ceremonials, a herald becomes conversant with every type, and is appealed to as arbiter in difficult points of ritual, thus adding to his reputation.

[427] [196] 203 552

Although acceptance of the post of herald somewhat curtails a man's activities in other respects, instances are known of energetic ones using the gifts received to establish themselves as chiefs, passing on their herald names at the same time to other incumbents. More often, a herald uses his wealth for the benefit of a son or other relative, being satisfied with his own status in the community. He takes a prominent part in every ceremony and is a person of some standing, yet is spared the responsibility of actually giving rites himself, a position which offers many attractions to a man lacking great ambition and initiative.

pended, so that it serves as a visible and tangible memorandum of the chief-like generosity of its owner. By means of these media, debts are passed from one individual to another without actual liquidation in goods; in fact, it is unlikely that the Bella Coola possess sufficient money to meet the sums represented by their coppers.

Prerogatives. Professions

The importance of prerogatives in the lives of the Bella Coola has already been noted in many connections. A man's name is his only because his ancestral family has the prerogative of using that designation; a *hamats'* dance can be performed only by an individual with the necessary prerogative; specific totem-pole designs, the portrayal of bird or animal on spoons, masks, house-posts, and other objects is a right dependent upon an ancestral prerogative; so is also the area on which a man can hunt or fish. The concept colours all Bella Coola life. Not only is a man's ceremonial life based on this principle, but on it depend his actions as chief, and the economic sources of his food-supply. No prerogative, even though it be the property of a man, is effective until validated by the distribution of presents. Much of a man's energy throughout life is expended on the validation and display of his prerogatives; most Bella Coola feuds are caused by the infringement of one individual on another's rights.

In addition to the various types already mentioned, there are a number of professional prerogatives on which depend a man's vocation. That of herald approximates this class, although the Bella Coola consider it rather as a right operative only during ceremonials. Professional prerogatives rest on the belief that a man's ability as a hunter, wood-worker, and so forth does not rest in his innate skill, but upon an inherited right which must be confirmed and validated by the distribution of presents. These can be given at any convenient time when the people have been called together, but, as it is to the man's advantage to have his right made known as widely

expenditure though he must forgo the prestige enjoyed by a man who has been able to elevate his professional names to a lavish manner. Selection is a constant factor in the social life of a Bulla Coola; the man who uses all his wealth to acquire a first seat cannot be "strong" in ceremonial matters; the man who desires to specialize in *hamat'sa* affairs cannot afford to display an elaborate totem-pole. Amid these conflicting desires, it often happens that a man somewhat neglects his professional prerogatives, especially those of which the dignity has been slightly lessened through superior skill shown by individuals endowed with no more than native ability. Upstarts of this kind have always infringed upon professional dignity, and the coming of the white man has added a new factor which has almost destroyed vocational prerogatives.

K'uk Dances

The most important, as well as the most spectacular, dances that occur at potlatches are those given by members of the *nusuk* society. In addition to these, a feature of many potlatches is the performance of *k'uk* dances.[1] As already mentioned, from 1870 onwards there have been many changes in *nusuk* ritual; new elements have been acquired by the marriages of Bulla Coola to members of the coastal tribes, with the result that details of procedure vary at every ceremony according to the prerogatives of the donor. Since 1910, the influence of white civilization has increased to such an extent that *nusuk* ceremonials have virtually been abandoned. This took place at a time when the ritual was in transition, a state of affairs which rendered difficult the collection of coherent information. *K'uk* dances are associated with *nusuk*, but the addition of new features to the latter was accompanied by a decay of the former. Both societies have now almost ceased to exist, but whereas the *nusuk* organization was abandoned during a period of change and accretion, that

[1] Called *t'alpus* in Kimsquit.

[illegible] (1922-1924) 1948
[illegible]

[illegible] at three rounds he retires utterly exhausted. The time beaten out for a *nuqsmel* or *am'ld-a* dancer is the same. He too comes over the fire and at first dances in the same manner until the singers in unison bellow out, *H'ai*, "More." With a run that ends in a crashing leap that seems to shake the floor, the performer takes his position between the fire and one of the side walls and begins to revolve furiously upon himself. His body is bent forward until it seems as if all that prevents him from falling to the floor is his hands clutched together as far as possible behind his back; while his feet move so rapidly that the short mincing steps run into each other. Gradually the leaping becomes less violent, only to be followed by another cry of *H'ai*, and another rush and jump that lands the dancer behind the fire. Here he revolves once more in the same furious fashion; the same is repeated on the side of the fire opposite to the place where he first performed, and finally between the fire and the door. *Nuqsmel* and *am'ld-a* are the most strenuous of all Bella Coola dances and the performer is glad to retire. He afterwards joins the audience. This dance entails no taboo or restrictions on the dancer.

This terminates the performance of this type of dance at a potlatch, but among the goods distributed are some to validate the name acquired by the dancer, and others to legalise his actual display.

The occasion on which importance and solemnity are attached to *a'alk* dances is during potlatches, but they are also given at other times. Most Bella Coola performances are so steeped in the presence of the supernatural that the element of enjoyment is secondary, but in the spring, after the end of the *dsaisa* season and before the salmon come to the rivers, dances for pleasure are of common occurrence. A *nuxsil* can call his fellows to his house and the singers beat out *nuxsil* songs to which the owners dance, but the most common hosts are *a'alk*. Of course an individual may be a member of both societies, but the heralds invite the guests in his *a'alk* name. Those summoned include both members of the society

[illegible] (1922-1924) 1948
NEH [illegible]

of each song dances to it. Anyone who has enough food to provide a meal for all is glad to invite his neighbours to such an affair, but the singers and heralds can force a stingy man to act as host. Everyone knows his neighbour's resources and the singers have no hesitation in going to the house of a man with an ample supply of food and beginning to host out songs there. The heralds are quick to see what is happening and call the people, with the result that the involuntary host is compelled to provide a meal in order not to be thought mean and churlish. Without waiting for the singers to take the initiative, heralds likewise often invite people to the house of a man whom they know to be well provided with food.

During the summer, the necessity of laying in supplies of salmon makes it impossible to hold many dances, although one of the non-sacred type just described takes place whenever there is a lull in the fishing. In the early autumn, when berries, fish, and game are abundant, the thoughts of chiefs turn to potlatches and the lengthy preliminaries are begun. At this season, too, a chief who lacks sufficient wealth to invite foreign guests, calls in his neighbours for a *nusad* dance and initiates some of his young relatives into that society. The ritual, described in the last chapter, resembles that of a potlatch except that no new house is constructed, there is no return of a dead relative, and the ceremonial connected with the coming of foreigners is necessarily omitted. In some cases a chief performs this type of rite a year before he proposes to hold a potlatch, and explains that he is doing so because he will be unable to give presents to the inhabitants of his own village at the later affair. Gifts so distributed are returnable with interest, though it is not obligatory for recipients to do this in time for the donor to make use of their repayment at his potlatch.

Ceremonials of this nature occupy the Bella Coola during the early autumn, while in winter *tusiut* dances take place almost nightly. When they are over, it is time for the non-sacred variety of *a'alt* performances, and for another type of

rite, nusāxKᵘmx.

cin, *wadédəmp*. This can be described here, since, although not closely associated with the potlatch, it serves to teach children the principles of present-giving and indiscriminate. February is the proper month for *wadédəmp*, although preliminary arrangements are made early in the winter. A chief who has a son or daughter about ten or twelve years of age may decide to use some of his food, and a small part of his wealth, for the benefit of the child. With the assistance of his relatives, the father begins making large numbers of toy canoes, miniature bows and arrows, small baskets, and models of all other types of articles commonly given away at potlatches. The manufacture of these requires several months, but towards the end of January they are nearly ready.

A name must then be chosen for the child. Since a *wadédəmp* dance is a humorous, non-sacred affair, a *wadédəmp* name is not embodied in a myth, but is drawn from some story. Occasionally, parents decide on a new one, but more often the designation selected is one used for the same purpose by a grandparent of the child. There is no rivalry with regard to names of this type, and one of them can be re-used without asking consent of the last incumbent, although permission would never be refused. There must be a song with each name and the grandparents and other elderly relatives teach this to a number of boys who are to act as singers. The words may have been remembered from a previous occasion; if not, a simple theme is composed by one of the old people having some reference to the name about to be conferred. For example, one appellation of this type is *Tepíwar*, Fawn, and the accompanying words are:

"We hear that Deer has borne a child."

Another name is *Xpáw*, Beaver, and the song: "Be of good cheer, the Beaver is coming."

A third song is, "Go outside under the house like a dog."

Occasionally a small incident in an ancestral myth is used. The teaching of the song to the juvenile singers is a source of constant merriment; the parents and grandparents are the

[532] principal instructors, aided by the professional musicians.
[547] Boys are always willing to act as singers for the practice they receive, and the gifts they will acquire. Other lads are chosen
[533] to act as heralds, an effort being made in each case to pick those likely to pursue these professions.

[146] The day finally selected for the ceremony is in February, on a date when nothing of importance is taking place. The juvenile heralds summon the child guests, who have been invited in accordance with the rules governing a potlatch, especial care being taken to omit none to whom the child donor is indebted. His father carefully instructs him in this matter, thus impressing on his son's mind one of the fundamental points of Bella Coola life. In the late afternoon, when all have
[535] assembled, the boy singers beat out the donor's song and he dances to it. It may be in the nature of a *round*, *o'alt*, or *haxixe* dance, according to the wishes of his parents. In many cases, one of the grandparents or some other old relative likewise dances to the song, using whatever style he chooses. There is no ceremonial significance to the ceremony and all enjoy themselves immensely, especially the adult guests. After
[553] the dancing, the new name is announced and presents are given to the guests. The father of the young donor carefully instructs him as to the scale of his gifts, emphasizing the necessity of rewarding the singers and heralds, and of repaying with interest those children from whom he has received favours. In this way, the ceremony serves as a practical example of how to conduct a potlatch. The parents of the donor always provide some tasty food for the occasion, and this is distributed after
[554] the gifts have been handed round. The necessity for food and presents makes it impossible for any but the children of chiefs to enjoy this training.

After the ceremony, the children parade up and down the sidewalk in front of the houses, singing boisterously. The performance has been for their benefit and they wish to "show off." One night completes the affair, but the following afternoon another child may summon his comrades to a similar

FEATURES ASSOCIATED WITH THE POTLATCH [illegible]

ceremony. The child singers first hand out the song of the present dance, then that of his predecessor, to which the latter dances once again. If food is plentiful, wealthy communities may be carried out every day for several weeks, or a year or two may elapse without one. A child's song is remembered from year to year and he dances whenever it is known sin. The name acquired in this way is used semi-jocularly by a lad's comrades. After marriage, it is considered unfitting for a youth to be concerned with wealthing and he normally becomes an e'ak.

Ceremonies of this kind have been discontinued for many years and it was impossible to obtain detailed accounts. The main features are clear: they served to instruct children in the methods of present-giving. According to one informant, there were two types of wealthing ceremonial; one of the humorous pattern above described in which, however, food alone was given away, and another in which miniature presents were distributed. This man believed that the latter was only possible for the children of wealthy chiefs, and that on such occasions the dances consisted of small incidents in the family myth. In either case, the importance of ceremonial can be judged from the manner in which it was impressed upon mere children.

ceremony, they can part at discretion without anyone being affronted. 586

When a wife runs away and seeks refuge with another man, her husband sometimes tries to kill his rival, but frequently both families endeavour to heal the breach amicably. Some of her relatives, particularly those who played an influential part in the marriage, first ask the husband whether or not he is willing to take her back. If the answer is in the affirmative, they next try to persuade her to return. Every argument is used, in many cases combined with threats against her seducer, and the reconciliation often succeeds. But she must never go back without presents, "to dry with fire the water that has entered the marriage." Her husband invites all his fellow-villagers to his house to a ceremony which is said "to uproot the house [of trouble]." The singers are in attendance and sing in succession many *hunter* songs, followed by *wood* songs, and to each the owner of the song dances, but since the supernatural beings are not present, the affair is of a non-sacred nature. The goods received from the family of the erring wife are distributed and the matter is at an end. Those who persuaded the wife to return are especially rewarded. [796] [431]

If the faithless wife should refuse to return, or if she should bear a child to her lover, reconciliation is not possible. Then it is incumbent on the woman's relatives to return to the husband as much goods as he has expended, with additions if they wish to uphold their own reputation. If the husband is clearly to blame, or if he is the deserting partner, his wife's family are not required to return the gifts they have received. There is no judicial tribunal of any kind, the force of public opinion alone impels restitution if the offender wishes to maintain his reputation in the community. Acting on this principle, the relatives of a deserted wife sometimes restore to her husband's family the presents they have received, thereby demonstrating their nobility and at the same time shaming the offender. 586 837 [626]

Formerly there was an elaborate ceremony to shame the [796] [626]

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husband or wife who destroyed a marriage by deserting his, or her, partner for a lover. One informant, aged about seventy, twice took part in this rite when a young man, but probably did not know the full details of it. He stated that it followed a divorce of two persons who had been married with full ceremony, whereas another, slightly younger informant, who remembered having seen the ceremony once when a mere lad, believed that it was only in the families of commoners. It appears certain that the rite has not been practised since about 1880, consequently there is an element of doubt as to the actual details, and even as to whether it was an affair of chiefs or commoners. It is probable that it was among the former.

When a woman deserted her husband one of the leading chiefs would take this opportunity of giving a ceremony of the type known as *lisiyākam*.[1] After consulting with his fellows to ensure that no one had any objections, and rarely including the deserted husband, he summoned the singers to his house. He would tell them his plans, and they would prepare the songs for the occasion. Five or six were always composed, with an effort to include as many foul remarks and allusions as possible, particularly with regard to the organs of the woman and her lover.

The singers spent about a week composing the songs, and meanwhile the chief who was giving the ceremony prepared food and made other necessary arrangements. When these were ready, the donor invited to his house all the members of the *tsaask* and *kusiut* societies for a rehearsal. The singers sang over the airs for the instruction of the guests. They were always worded as if it were the deserted husband speaking in foul terms of his ex-wife. The theme of one was:

"My wife has pudenda like those of a black bear."

The guests joined in the singing and also supplied foul themes by calling out observations about the organs of women in general, and of the deserting wife in particular. The singers

[1] The relation of this to the *a'alt* dance of the same name is obscure, cf. I, p. 279.

mind to incorporate as many of these as possible, so that the rite soon became a chorus of obscenities. The songs were sung and resung until all present were familiar with them, then the donor of the rite distributed food and all departed.

The following afternoon everyone, including those uninitiated into either society, were invited to the donor's house. Probably the only absentees from the village were the deserting wife and her lover, while guests from neighbouring settlements were often in attendance. On this occasion, for the first time, the deserted husband used to take the leading part. When the singers struck up the tune of the first song, he used to appear, supported by four or five assistants. His face was blackened with soot, he wore a lynx-skin belt, and above his head was fashioned some insulting object, usually a representation of the female organs made of wood, cedar-bark and berries, as realistic as possible. As the singers sang, aided by those who had learnt the songs on the previous day, the husband danced, moving his body so that the ornament on top of his head was shaken suggestively. Meanwhile the spectators kept calling out filthy epithets of any kind on his ex-wife and her lover. Sometimes the dancer was able to insert some obscene remarks into the display. On one occasion, for example, he pulled some lynx fur from his belt and threw it in the face of a *Tâl-is* man who happened to be present, and who had once seduced a married woman and accordingly been the butt of a similar rite, with the remark:

"All *Tâl-is* women have hairy pudenda like that."

The guests were invited to suggest foul nick-names for the man with whom the dancer's wife had eloped. One of these was adopted by general agreement of opinion, and the man was commonly called by it henceforth. Two names so created were:

Skulsos, "The One Whose Face is Wrinkled like a Woman's Organs," and,

Emoisaik, "The One Who Cohabited Publicly."

[illegible] [illegible]

One very old man is still, 1913, commonly called by this last designation, much to his annoyance.

When the songs had been sung, each accompanied by the dancing of the deserted husband, the donor of the ceremony distributed food and the guests departed. The only advantage to the giver of the rite was that it enabled him to show his wealth in an apparently disinterested fashion by gifts of food. Usually he was a friend of the aggrieved husband.

When a husband deserted his wife, the other women of the village used to perform an exactly similar ceremony. The same type of songs were composed, and during their singing the deserted wife used to dance, wearing above her head representations of a penis and testicles. By means of hidden strings she was able to cause the former to become erect.

On other occasions the ceremony was varied by an announcer asking the offended party about the appearance of the deserter. There followed a minute and highly coloured description about the unpleasantness of his genital organs, a description which was swiftly incorporated into the songs.

It can be taken as a matter of course that the above description is little more than an outline of the Bella Coola ceremony of shaming. In spite of its deficiencies, it is important, as evidence of the former sentiment with regard to divorce. Obscene though the ceremony must have been, both in acting and in the free use of personalities, it must have been a powerful deterrent to divorce.[1] Indeed it would be difficult to imagine a stronger one in a community where a man's position is judged by public opinion and where his greatest aversion is to public ridicule. It is unfortunate that we shall probably never know whether the rite was associated with chiefs or commoners.

CEREMONIAL MARRIAGE

Since marriage gains much of its importance from the complicated business transactions between the two families, with

[1] A similar rite was occasionally carried out for unmarried mothers.

DEATH

Death Rites—Memorial Rites—Fate of the Dead

Death Rites

DEATH is marked by even more complicated and prolonged rites than marriage. Like so many primitive peoples, the Bella Coola not only carry out elaborate rituals soon after the actual decease, but hold lengthy commemorative and mourning ceremonials in later years. As these require the co-operation of a large number of people, the death of an individual affects a wider circle than his own relatives, and the celebrations have, therefore, an important social as well as religious significance.

Omens of Death

It is not surprising that the Bella Coola, believing in the omnipresence of the supernatural, should consider various peculiar occurrences to be omens of death. One of the simplest of these is to hear the falling of a tree when there is neither wind nor other reason to account for it. Such a fall is audible only to the person whom it warns of approaching death, either to himself or to one of his relatives. A number of men may be in the forest together, when one of them hears the crash of a tree and notices that his companions are unaware of it; he realises that this is an omen and protects himself by calling out:

"Let this evil react against whoever has been plotting evil against me."

The basis of this custom is the belief that someone has been practising black magic against the hearer, who, by this answer, is able to cause the sorcery to recoil upon the malefactor. Even more dangerous than to hear a falling tree, is to have one crash

body becomes ought down and was melted upwards in psychological of the type which might serve as basis for a rite of this kind. If the descendants of the person to whom this had happened had dramatized the incident as subsequent deaths, a custom analogous to the one here described would have arisen.

DISPOSAL OF THE BODY

There is no fixed time for the disposal of a corpse. When possible, it takes place on the day following death, but as many as four days may elapse if delay is necessary for the performance of the rite just described. Another reason for postponement is the absence of near relatives, if they can be summoned within four or five days, the funeral may be delayed until their arrival. There is always endless discussion concerning the exact details; all relatives and members of the ancestral family take part, though the wishes of a son, brother, or other near kinsman are usually followed. In this, as in so many points of Bella Coola ritual, an influential chief often overrules the desires even of those who are more closely related to the deceased.

Herelds announce the hour chosen,[1] usually about noon, and the people begin to assemble in the deceased's house, even strangers being welcome. Women wail dolorously, and another indication of the occasion is the bundles containing clothing, cooking utensils, and other articles belonging to the dead person. The lid of the coffin has been left open, but when everything is ready, an elderly man is asked to strike it, once, with a stone; then the lid is closed. Planks have been removed and a hole made in one of the front corners of the house, through which the man throws out the stone. The women redouble their lamentations as an old woman, previously asked to do so, lights a bundle of dyed and undyed cedar-bark and climbs through the opening carrying this. No request has been made for pall-bearers, but any strong men, especially

[1] This is done at present, even after the carrying away of the "body." In former times it was omitted when the corpse was secretly buried by the *ninnk*.

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and recompense to funeral assistants is usually deferred until that time. Such was often true even in former years, although poor people used to call their fellow-villagers together for the express purpose of publicly rewarding those who had helped to bury one of their relatives. It is probable that a ceremony of this kind was of a simple type. Another expedient is, and was, to give gifts to the grave-diggers and others at any convenient ceremony, such as a non-secret *nusuk* dance. As repeatedly mentioned, when the people have been called together for a ceremony, advantage is often taken of the gathering to settle debts or to perform rites of an entirely different nature. It is probable that the summoning of guests solely to witness the payment of helpers was always unusual; at present it never occurs. On those occasions when a body was buried in secret after the carrying away of a dummy figure by the crest, the goods of the deceased were deposited as usual in the cemetery. Those who carried them were the ones who had performed the secret interment, and when publicly recompensed for taking articles to the grave it was possible to increase the value of the gifts as reward for the hidden rite without exposing the subterfuge.

Another type of ceremonial taking place after a funeral is the cleansing from the contamination of death of near relatives of the deceased, and of those who have handled the corpse. If spring salmon or olachen are running, pall-bearers must not go near the river for ten days, or twenty according to some informants, after taking a body to the grave. They have become tainted with ceremonial uncleanness which, if brought to the river bank, would poison the salmon. Unwillingness to become affected in this way led, on at least one occasion, to an elderly, friendless slave being carried out to the cemetery by some old women who covered him with boards. The taint on grave-diggers cannot be removed, but automatically lapses after ten days.

The individual in greatest danger is the husband or wife whose consort has passed away. It is believed that *Sä-lma*

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[556 769] diate family. Confusion is probable only when a chief is bereaved after he has stored up goods and made preliminary preparations for a potlatch; he may then carry out the rites intended, but designate the ceremony a memorial potlatch. [975] More often, however, the affair is limited to rites associated with the deceased. Consequently, there is omission of the initiation of neophytes into the *nusuś* and *a'alł* societies,[a] there is no establishment of new seats for young relatives of the donor, and no strengthening of his own. It must be emphasized [184] once more that there is no unalterable sequence of prescribed rituals at either potlatch or memorial potlatch; the omissions just mentioned are customary, not universal, and when present the ritual of the two ceremonies is identical. Except on those rare occasions when omitted at a potlatch, the return of a dead relative is the central feature of both.

[178] In recent years, the great increase in wealth has made it possible for a chief to perform a memorial potlatch soon after the death of an esteemed relative. This was rarely the case in former times, but as there was no other reason for which valuables were so ardently desired, every expedient was used to obtain the necessary goods. Occasionally, a chief happened to have the needful goods stored up so that he could give a memorial potlatch almost immediately. To such a fortunate individual the term, *yestla*, was applied, a word difficult to translate but combining the significances of *rich*, *ready*, *fortunate*, and *revered*.

[796] Memorial potlatches, like those of the ordinary kind, are usually held in the early autumn, though occasionally one may be postponed until after the *kusiut* season. When an intending donor has decided that he owns sufficient goods, he first calls in his fellow-chiefs and makes known his intentions, at the same time expounding in considerable detail the myths which [533] he proposes to use as themes for mourning songs, and for other

[a] Performance of such rites at a memorial potlatch would be considered sinful by the Bella Bella and were always omitted during the period when their influence was important.

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type of dance differs from all other Bella Coola ones, since no inherited prerogative is required. Years ago such exhibitions were common, although curing shamans were rare.

The usual time for a shaman's performance is at the conclusion of the *kusiut* season, though one is sometimes held prior to that period if the would-be performer fears that the food which he has stored up for the event is likely to be frozen.

When he decides to give a dance, the shaman first summons the singers to his house and teaches them a song of his own composition. Theoretically both text and tune should have been received from his supernatural benefactor, but many performers undoubtedly employ songs used by shaman ancestors which they have chanced to remember. Another device is to describe a supernatural being seen in a dream. In some cases there is deliberate deception, but in most the performer persuades himself that he has received supernatural authorization. The texts are full of obscure allusions, a river, for example, is spoken of as swift running water. Often a man will treasure a song for years, before collecting the wealth necessary to use it publicly, with the social prestige attached. A shaman always obtains a name from his supernatural benefactor, but if a man merely uses a feat observed in a dream, this is impossible, so he adopts the designation of some deceased shaman, soon convincing himself that it was uttered by the apparition. Others will probably remember this name, hence suspicions may easily be aroused concerning the authenticity of the performance, but it is not customary to voice these. The singers repeat the song which they have just heard, and continue doing so until they have mastered it. Sometimes they compose further songs themselves for the performer. During the practising, those who are not *kukusiut* are expelled from the house. A shaman is a person who has come in contact with the supernatural; hence he is akin to the members of the society who, therefore, support him during his rite.[1] A herald is sent out

[1] Theoretically, a shaman need not be a *kusiut*, but visitations usually come only to those of religious and imaginative temperaments, who are in the majority of cases already members of the society.

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shaman pours the grease on the central fire, and throws on it also the figures and some dried salmon. Thus propitiated, it is believed that the dead will be more likely to allow the sickness to be sucked forth.

Shamans from the dead perform conjuring feats and dramatic performances of the same type as ordinary shamans. Until he gives his first dance a newly created shaman is known as a *lsux*, the same word that is used for a *kusiut* initiate, and during this period he wears the shaman's collar of intertwined dyed and undyed cedar-bark. If he is wealthy and influential, a shaman will repeat his dance every fourth year. Such a performance can be held at any season, although the usual time is after the *kusiut* ceremonies. The dramatic representations are of scenes witnessed in the land below, though sometimes they are done in a reverse manner, following the practice of the dead in doing things strangely. Thus one shaman reported that the ghosts wore very long blankets, but when he danced he wore one that came only to his hips. The method of singing is the same as that employed by ordinary shamans, but one whose power is derived from the dead dances with head bent downwards, his free hand pointing to the ground with first finger extended. Also his cry of "*xwai, xwai, xwai,*" uttered at intervals with a deep cadence, differs from that used by ordinary shamans. A dance always terminates with the distribution of food to validate the ceremony.

Like ordinary shamans, those from the dead cannot transmit their power. At death their songs too are lost, unless they choose to give them to a friend who is also a shaman from the dead. This is obviously contrary to the theoretical belief that all songs have been obtained during revelations, but is not at all contrary to the Bella Coola practice of having the singers assist the visionaries in "remembering" their visions.

The following tale, although drawn from the distant past, is a typical illustration of one of the many ways in which shamanistic power is received from the dead.[1]

[1] A few stories of similar type have been included in vol. I, chap. VIII to explain the life of the dead, and others are grouped together in the next chapter.

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224 [732] hanging rock where no rain can penetrate. Long ago, some hunter failed to do this and became blind in consequence, hence the rite has since been carried out.

When a hunter is in the field, his wife must not swing. To do this causes him to go up into lofty and dangerous places as she rises on the swing, and also destroys the power laboriously accumulated by ceremonial chastity.

Ritual Acts

796 226 989 Ceremonialism is an extremely important aspect of Bella Coula life, but most of their rites are social or religious rather than magical, so that descriptions of them belong to other chapters. In connection with the taking of the first olachen and salmon, however, a number of ritual acts are performed to bring about desired ends; the element of propitiation is not entirely absent, but on the whole they may be considered as magical.

Rites connected with the first olachen

226 796 574 At the height of the olachen run, the fish are so abundant that they can be taken profitably in large purse-nets. They do not, however, come simultaneously, and eager fishermen keep watching for their arrival and catching the straggling forerunners in hand dip-nets. These fish must not be eaten immediately. Each fisherman arranges a box in the front part of his house in which he deposits them as taken; if several men are doing this in a single dwelling, one box for each will be arranged near the front-door. Whenever a dance is held, eagle down is blown over the receptacle to placate the olachen and prevent them from being disturbed by the noise. As soon as a man has caught enough for a feast, he invites all his fellows to his house and the fish are distributed. It is taboo for any woman to share this meal, and it is most improper for a man to summon his neighbours until he has enough olachen to allow each guest to carry home a plentiful supply for his family. In former times, there used to be a number of meals of this kind,

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since each fisherman provided one when his box was filled. 226

No one is allowed to drink water immediately after eating the first olachen of the spring, since to do so would cause a flood. It is considered most improper for a child to cry soon after partaking of this food; if he does so, he is quieted by having nettles stuffed into his mouth. As already described, if a person dies before the first fish have passed through his bowels, a shaman must wipe his lips with cedar-bark. 796 574 [865]

After the first meal of olachen, stakes for the nets can be driven, and the restrictions become less exacting. Women are not allowed to assist in fishing, but the men devote their full time to the task, working with zest and energy.[1] An abundant supply of olachen is a source of joy, and all listen eagerly for the singing of the thrush, *smxmxaxls*, which signifies that the nets are full to bursting. Half jocularly, people invite the bird to come and eat, but his melody is interpreted as: 226 [562] [825]

"I shall eat when the river is full."

RITES CONNECTED WITH THE FIRST SPRING SALMON[2]

Salmon is the most important article of Bella Coola diet and the rites which accompany the earliest taking of the fish are relatively complicated. 226 796 [262]

When the first spring salmon have been caught, they are laid in the canoe with their heads all pointing eastward, upstream. The fisherman poles to shore, but instead of landing his catch, he fastens the salmon to a stake driven at the edge of the bank so that they remain in the water. A number of posts are usually placed in readiness, each decorated with alternate spirals of dyed and undyed cedar-bark and crowned with an eagle's tail. Each day one or two more fish may be caught, but all are left in the water until the first have become soft, thus giving sufficient time for the necessary preparations on shore. It is the duty of every owner of a salmon-weir to build near its end a so-called Spring Salmon House, a shed-like [343]

[1] For a description of olachen fishing, see Appendix A.
[2] Cf. Boas, p. 78.

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structure with a roof but without side walls. To this the successful fisherman brings long strings of dyed and undyed cedar-bark, eagle down, and spoons made of maple-bark; in this task he is assisted by his relatives as well as by anyone else willing to help.

When all has been prepared, the fisherman asks the men of the village to gather on the bank to assist him. No one is compelled to do so, but in actual fact everyone is glad to be present unless prevented by some valid reason. A friend takes a canoe pole and points at the head of the first salmon, while all call in unison, *xaẖ'loi·*, a word for which no meaning is known, and which is said to have been used unintelligibly for many generations. If he is standing on the south bank of the stream, the fisherman passes his left hand outside his right, seizes the fish behind the neck with the former, and by the tail with the latter; then he turns around sunwise, uncrossing his arms, so that his catch is still pointing upstream. If the village is on the north side of the river, the position of the hands is reversed. He carries the salmon to the Spring Salmon House and places it on a layer of fresh cottonwood and willow leaves spread over the ground. A young assistant, who is decorated with bands of dyed and undyed cedar-bark, lifts from his left arm one of a number of two-foot strips of the same material carried there and lays it over the salmon's head so that part of the string is within its mouth. As he does this he says:

Ipâxellai, q̓ûmx̣ûmilso,[1] "Accept, O Salmon."

Q̓ûmx̣ûmila is not the usual word for salmon, but signifies rather, "Food"; it is the designation used by supernatural beings for these fish and is hence applied by *xmmq* to their prey, human beings.

After this has been done, eagle down is blown over the fish. A second salmon is likewise taken from the river, with the same cry of *xaẖ'loi·*, laid with its head on its predecessor's tail, and the same rite carried out. This is repeated till all are arranged in line, with their heads pointing upstream. The

[1] The vocative form of the word.

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women listening from the village are able to tell how many have been caught from the number of times the cry *xak'loi·'s* raised. 226 796

Then the salmon are cut up (only shell knives may be used for the purpose) and cooked. Everything must be used, heads, bones, and entrails, the only refuse being the blood which is scraped from the leaves and carried into the woods. The leaves themselves, and the strings of dyed and undyed cedar-bark are thrown into the river in accordance with a desire expressed by *Noāk̓num* long ago. When everything is ready for a meal, the men take their places in two rows, facing each other across a coarse bark mat. Bark spoons have been provided, and when the heralds call for food, the fisherman brings the heads of the salmon and the guests make the motions of eating, though in reality these parts are dried and kept for winter. Boxes containing a liberal portion of the choice meat are next served and all eat freely. Each guest puts on one side what he has not consumed as if to carry it away, as is the custom at an ordinary feast, though his share is really left in the shelter until the following day. Finally, a third course is provided, the back of the fish cooked with the bone in position. Like the last, the guests eat as much as they desire and pack up the residue as if to take away. Then they leave the Spring Salmon House. [412] 226 796 574 [251]

All the fish are not cooked on the one occasion. The following day the fisherman again calls back the men of his village. The same type of meal is served, but this time the guests carry away what they do not eat for the benefit of their families. This portion may be eaten by the women without affronting the salmon. [562]

This rite has not been performed in full detail in Bella Coola for many years, and it was impossible to collect information on some points. It is uncertain, for example, whether this ceremony was carried out by every fisherman or whether there used to be certain individuals with the prerogative of dealing with the first catch. The latter appears to be the most logical 226 796 424

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manner, and was definitely stated to be the case by one well-informed old man. It is clear, however, that every spring salmon was landed with the cry of *xak'loi·*, taken to the Spring Salmon House, and cut up by the men until the time when women were allowed near the river. Another old man stated that the feast took place at night and that only the heads and refuse of the first catch were eaten, the remainder being dried for the winter. Women of child-bearing age were not allowed on the river bank, and were rigorously excluded from the Spring Salmon House until the time when the sun's shadow reached a diagonal scar on the slope of one of the mountains on the north side of North Bentinck Arm. This occurs about August. From that time onwards, there was no calling of *xak'loi·*, and women, except those who were taboo, could cut salmon freely on the bank. It was even stated that refuse of salmon could be thrown into the river after that time. No one knows the origin of this seasonal prohibition, or why it should end when the sun reaches a certain point, but it was faithfully observed in former times.

In Kimsquit similar rites were carried out, the chief variation being that the bodies of four swans were placed in the Spring Salmon House and the fish laid with these at intervals in the line. Moreover, the youth used to bite the back of each salmon as he presented it with the cedar-bark streamer. The same regulations with regard to drinking water, and crying after eating, were enforced for spring salmon as for olachen.

Miscellaneous Beliefs

The following miscellaneous beliefs and customs cannot be assigned to any special aspect of Bella Coola life:

If a spark from a fire jumps out and lights on a person's hand, it is said:

"The fire wants to give you [the person on whom the brand has fallen] food."

If a man sneezes repeatedly, it is said:

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/For a description of the ritual of specific dances of the kusiut society see category 116, pp. 41-271./

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/For texts and comments on songs used in kusiut rites see category 116, pp. 305-331./

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CHAPTER I

WINTER CEREMONIAL DANCES

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General Observations on the Kusiut Society — Powers and Functions of the Society — Initiation — The Ritual of Specific Dances — Various Origin Myths — Kusiut Prerogatives Other than Dances — The Death of a Kusiut — The Final Rite — Concluding Observations and History.

General Observations on the *Kusiut* Society

IN view of the importance of the *kusiut* society in the lives of the Bella Coola, it would seem logical to have described it in an earlier part of this monograph. Though an integral part of the complicated structure of social organization, it is a secret, semi-religious grouping which can best be treated separately. The word *kusiut* is connected etymologically, according to native belief, with *siut*, the term for a supernatural being. Thus the meaning of the society's designation is "The Supernatural," or "The Learned," for *siut* has both these significations. A member of the society is likewise called a *kusiut*, plural, *kukusiut*.

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The investigator soon learns of the existence of the society. If he asks a man his name, and then inquires further what type of designation it is, the answer is always that it is his *kusiut* name, that is, the one by which he is known as a member of the society. Ancestral names are used only at potlatches or other ceremonial occasions, whereas an individual's *kusiut* appellation is the one which he uses commonly. Moreover, for about three months of every year the Bella Coola live in an atmosphere of *kusiut* dances with a performance, or its preliminaries, taking place almost every night. Preparations for this ceremonial season, for so it may be termed, begin four days after the September moon is full, while the actual dances commence early in November and are continued until March. During this period the *kukusiut* are believed to be in intimate

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contact with supernatural beings, so that it is a time for grave thoughts and decorous behaviour. Even by day the members pass from house to house with dignified mien, not loitering around the sidewalks nor indulging in frivolity. Every effort is made to prevent quarrels between members who are expected to show by their appearance and actions the gravity of the rites in which they are engaged. Night after night they assemble at the house wherein the dance is taking place; those who have performed, and are therefore most closely in touch with the supernatural, even sleep there, not returning to their own houses until March. A dance usually lasts four nights, and during that time the performer's house, in which it takes place, is termed a *nuɬpik*, "An Empty House." The significance of this designation is unknown.

Membership in the society depends on a duly validated ancestral prerogative to perform one of the many *kusiut* dances. At the present time every Bella Coola is a *kusiut*, even babes in arms being initiated, but formerly no one was admitted until he or she had reached an age of discretion. Some informants went so far as to say that the hair of an initiate must have begun to turn grey, and all agreed that no one was ever admitted until at least twenty, or more often, twenty-five years of age. Initiates were frequently still older; one woman, for example, stated that her mother was past the age of childbearing before admission. Since only a member of the society could be called by a *kusiut* name, the uninitiated continued to be known by the ancestral names conferred on them at infancy until they received *kusiut* designations. The importance of the society depends on the belief of the uninitiated in the supernatural powers of its members, and as there are now none to impress, the rites carried out today are little more than pictures of what took place years ago. It is the aim of the Bella Coola to carry out the dances as if uninitiated persons were in attendance, and since most of the following information was obtained from men who well remembered their sensations when not members of the society, it is justifiable to use the present

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tense throughout this chapter, and to assume the presence of a number of young men and women ignorant of the significance of the rites. Formerly, the *kukusiut* often had difficulty in impressing the uninitiated with their prowess, and feuds with the *a'alk* were common.

Although membership in the *kusiut* society depends on an ancestral prerogative, it is essentially a democratic institution. A certain amount of wealth is necessary to validate a *kusiut* prerogative, but nothing comparable to that required for a potlatch; in fact, poor men are often persons of great importance within the ranks of the society. Nor are the prerogatives considered to be as valuable as ancestral rights, so that slaves are often admitted as *kukusiut* by their masters. An important *kusiut* is not esteemed by the community in the same way as the donor of many potlatches; in short, membership in the society brings limited ceremonial and semi-religious advantage, not social prestige of a public nature.

Powers and Functions of the Society

Any secret society can be viewed from the standpoints of a member, and of a non-member. The scope of the *kusiut* organization can be most clearly outlined by describing first what an uninitiated person knows about it. From his infancy, parents impress upon a child the supernatural powers of the *kukusiut* and the dangers attached to their rites. Such instruction is perhaps strongest where one, or both, is not a member. They then voice their own fears, and do not merely deceive for the good of the society. Steeped as every child is in a firm belief of the near presence of the supernatural, he readily believes what he is told. He learns, for example, that if, without special invitation, he dares enter the house where a *kusiut* dance is taking place—at any time during the four days or more that it lasts—his spirit will be drawn from him. This is sufficient to deter him from prying too closely into the rites. Strangely enough, there seem always to have been differences in teaching with respect to this deception. It is believed that if a non-

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informant, the entry of a strange spirit into his body does not inconvenience the dancer, although he senses its presence, and asks who will pay for its return. Unless the owner at once steps forward to claim his property and promises to pay, his spirit is thrown into the fire and he dies. The *kukusiut* sometimes tell an uninitiated person that his spirit has been attracted from him, thereby terrifying him so greatly that he appeals to a shaman to recover it for him. The expert greases his hands, warms them at a fire, and pretends to pluck something from the *kusiut* which he inserts into the loser's neck.

In view of the firm conviction that the spirit is essential to an individual's welfare, it is not surprising that this belief should awe the uninitiated and fill them with profound respect for the *kukusiut*. The diversity in the details of procedure proves that the practice has not become standardized; those who are not members of the society believe and do not test the claims.

Another source of strength claimed by the *kukusiut* is ability to witness and imitate the dances of the supernatural beings held in *Nusmāt·a* prior to the entry of *Ăĺquntăm*. As already described, it is believed that a supernatural element from every living creature upon earth ascends at this time but, in a way that is not fully understood, only those belonging to *kukusiut* can take part in the ceremonies. Is it strange, therefore, that members of the society are regarded with awe by their less fortunate fellows? Presents are given after every dance in *Nusmāt·a* and the supernatural elements receive their due share. When, however, *Ăĺquntăm* enters, he is so big and so hot that almost all who have assembled rush forth furiously, and in the crush at the narrow doorway disaster overtakes many of the visiting human representatives. Some drop their gifts, and their owners will be unfortunate; others fall, and their owners cannot survive until the next ceremonial season. This same fate may befall even those who are not members of the *kusiut* society, but they do not have the ability to appreciate what has happened.

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*575 787 776 796 *Ałquntăm* enters and confers on *kusiut* matters with *Sɛxsɛxɬălaix*, his assistant in affairs connected with his functions as leader of the supernatural *kukusiut*.[1] This being acts as announcer and intermediary with *Ałquntăm*, but himself lacks the power of initiating matters. The two discuss whether or not it is advisable to allow mortal *kukusiut* to perform certain dances of the type known as *kusiotem* (II, p.128), and if so, they transmit the necessary power to the earthly dancer who has the proper prerogative, thus enabling him to give a graphic representation of what is done in the upper land.

*575 796 787 776 535 This is the essence of the *kusiut* dances. Each portrays a performance given by one of the supernatural beings in the house above, or some other aspect of his activities. Each earthly dancer has as patron a supernatural being, usually the one who carries out the dance of which his own is a model, and between patron and protégé there exists a relationship by means of which the latter receives the power necessary to perform. To do so, the uninitiated believe that he must receive a *yeux*, which can be translated as "call," from his associate above. Moreover, not only is each patron a supernatural being, but each is guided by *Ałquntăm* in the performance of the *kusiut* rites in the land above, which indirectly increases the prestige of the protégé.

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*575 787 776 796 184 [828] [1]The differences of belief of individual Bella Coola, dependent upon family traditions, is nowhere shown with greater clearness than in this meeting of the leaders of the supernatural dancers. It is clear that the Bella Coola have no uniformity of belief, even in what might be regarded as fundamental concepts. One informant, well versed in *kusiut* matters, asserted that there are five supernatural leaders, *Ałquntăm* and his assistants, *Smaiaikila*, *Sɛxsɛxɬălaix*, *Snunlhăls*, and *Sunălotla*. Others were equally emphatic that *Ałquntăm* is the *kusiut* name of the supreme deity, and that *Sunălotla*, *Smaiaikila*, and *Snunlhăls*, are merely other designations for the same deity with regard to different functions. This belief has been followed during the monograph, by designating the supreme deity as *Ałquntăm*, the name by which he is termed with respect to his *kusiut* powers. These two opinions are not as basically different as appears at first sight. A man is considered as having two, or more, personalities with respect to different rites at which he is called by different names. Since the supreme deity is regarded as a superman, who functions in diverse manners, it is not difficult to understand how these are sometimes ascribed to different individuals, and sometimes to the one under different names.

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Furthermore, throughout the ceremonial season, the uninitiated have ocular demonstrations of the powers with which the *kukusiut* are associated. At frequent intervals they are invited to the house of the dancer where, with wonder, fear, and awe, they see strange creatures. Although they may recognize that some of these are only their fellow-tribesmen in strange form, they have no idea how such transformations are produced, and ascribe them to supernatural assistance. They accept the strange designs of the figures as proof that the *kukusiut* have been in contact with unfamiliar beings. It seems clear that the uninitiated do not realize that the representations are produced by means of masks, the work of human hands; instead, they believe that the figures displayed are really those of supernatural patrons who have come to earth to assist their protégés. It must be remembered that these dances take place within large houses, only partially illuminated by a flickering central fire, which facilitates deception and conjuring tricks, quite apart from the credulity of the observers.

The uninitiated may sometimes suspect that the performers are not real supernatural beings, but there is no question of their firm conviction concerning the changes which come over the *kukusiut* at this time. One member of the society, for example, may begin to act in a peculiar manner and at once the uninitiated are ejected from the house. From without they listen with mixed fear and excitement to the strange noises which they do not know are made by whistles, and presently the *kusiut* rushes forth in a frenzied state, biting those he meets. The uninitiated know that he is a Cannibal, doing as his patron above is doing, and that a call from the latter has caused him to become mad. When the *kukusiut* have subdued him and taken him back to his house, the non-membersh ear more strange and inexplicable sounds, which appear to go upwards, and presently the news is circulated that the Cannibal has been carried away to the land above. He is seen no more for several weeks, and when next he appears he is thin, wan, and bald, because the high winds of the land above have blown

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the hair from his head. After various rites which prove that the Cannibal actually possesses peculiar power, he is calmed and songs are sung describing what he saw aloft, and the dangers from which he escaped. The uninitiated shiver sympathetically, marvel at his valour, and anticipate with mixed feelings the time when they too may be privileged to have similar experiences. Or they may witness the killing of one of their fellow-villagers by disembowelling, and his restoration to life. They know the victim; under ordinary circumstances he could not endure death, hence the claim that his strength is due to the call given him by his patron is accepted as an obvious fact. The uninitiated never suspect that they are victims of an elaborate deception. At all times the *kukusiut* are eager to make known their own perils, and if it happens that a member of the society dies while in concealment, his corpse is buried secretly. The explanation given is that he has succumbed to some of the dangers to which *kukusiut* are exposed, a fiction readily believed in view of the absence of the usual funeral rites.

Though it is common knowledge that the ability of a *kusiut* to perform any extraordinary feat has its source in the performance of the same feat by his supernatural patron, yet it is equally well known that his specific power has been brought to this earth and is located in one particular spot. An ancestor must in some way have come in contact with the patron, and at that time his *kusiut* name, carrying with it the prerogatives of supernatural patronage and of dancing on this earth, was deposited for safe-keeping in a repository, *nuskāsiutsta* (also called *nusxi'ipsta*), by the supernatural woman *Ăno'likwolsaix*. Each repository is thought of as a cave, or hollow, beneath a large tree, a rock, or other distinctive natural object; to obtain his power a *kusiut* initiate must go there, actual contact with his patron being unnecessary. Every *kusiut* prerogative has its repository and in each of these is *Ăno'likwolsaix*; she is one, yet capable of being simultaneously in many hundred spots, corresponding to the many hundred *kusiut* prerogatives. Her

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years in deceiving, undoubtedly begins to convince himself that he is different from lesser mortals.

Before describing in detail initiation into the *kusiut* society, and then the ritual of various dances, it will be convenient to outline the type of ceremonial, although emphasizing the fact that each differs so much from every other that lengthy descriptions will be necessary later on. When a person has been initiated either in the proper manner during the ceremonial season or as a "shaman" during the summer, he is known as a *law*, a novice, until the *kusiut* dances of the next winter. During this period he wears certain distinctive cedar-bark ornaments and is expected to keep himself somewhat apart from the uninitiated. He is always required to give his ceremonial during the first dance season after initiation; by so doing he ceases to be a novice. In later years a *kusiut* can suit himself whether or not to perform. Having once done so, he is a fully qualified member of the society, nor does he increase his rank in direct proportion to the number of his ceremonies. It is true that one who often dances hears himself praised by the marshals, and gains a certain amount of fame among his fellow *kukusiut*. But no matter how often he may perform, he cannot become a chief, with prestige spread far and wide among neighbouring tribes, nor can he increase the fame of his ancestors by adding lustre to his ancestral names. Thus the benefits are not sufficient to urge a man to concentrate on *kusiut* ceremonials in preference to potlatches. The society is essentially one in which a relatively poor man can display his semi-religious prerogative equally with a chief. Usually, a man performs a complicated ritual, such as that of a Cannibal dance, three or four times during his lifetime; less onerous ones in which no dramatic theme is presented may be more often given.

A man who proposes to give a dance must always notify one of the marshals of his village, who summons his fellows, some of the senior members of the society, and chiefs who are also *kukusiut* to discuss the intention. If it entails one of the

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more difficult dramatic rites in which failure would lead to the uninitiated learning the mysteries of the society, the matter is debated at length. The writer was present at one meeting held for this purpose with regard to a performance which had not been carried out for over thirty years. An air of solemnity was evident throughout, as if each present realized the gravity of the topic. The prospective dancer explained what he wished to do, then anyone was at liberty to comment, and most of those present took advantage of it, the marshals speaking last of all. The influence of each speaker depended in part on the type of *kusiut* dance which he himself had given, and in part on his general status in the community as chief or otherwise, an intangible position dependent on public estimation rather than upon functional rights. In this case, after considerable discussion, it was decided that the dancer could proceed with his arrangements. But if there should be any doubt as to the would-be performer's ability, the marshals have no hesitation in prohibiting his intended rite, and they often do so later if rehearsals show that it is unlikely to be successful.

Refusal of permission to perform occurs only in case of the more difficult dances, which include the Cannibal, Scratch, Breaker, Fungus and *Kusiotem*. Members of the society whose prerogatives are for one of these types are considered as having greater importance than those who can merely sing of some minor deity-patron; yet all are equally members of the *kusiut* society, which is not graded according to the performances of its members.

Many of the more difficult dances require weeks of preparation, when it is sometimes said that the dancer has disappeared to the land above. When he returns they usually conclude in four nights, the time taken by those of a simpler type. Each of these nights is known by an untranslatable term, and, as it will be necessary to use these throughout, it may assist the reader to summarize the ritual which takes place on each. It can be assumed that it is a simple dance, that is, one without elaborate preliminaries.

[i.e. of a Kusiut dance - ANALYST]

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The first night is *ɬsuxtälaix* or *ɬsuxtämem*.[5] This is when the call comes to a prospective dancer. This may be heralded by whistling from above, made by a *kusiut* sent with a whistle to a neighbouring mountain for the purpose, by a thud on the roof, likewise produced by an accomplice, or by no intimation whatever. The dancer utters a low call, sometimes begins to walk in circles with bent head, or to act in some other peculiar manner, while a whistle sounds repeatedly. The uninitiated are at once expelled from his house and a herald informs the village that something strange has come upon the dancer. The *kukusiut* gather in his house, and four times help him by the frenzied, but regular, beating of sticks. Then the singers sing a song previously prepared, the words describing either his patron or the land above. After listening closely, the *kukusiut* join in and rehearse it until it is familiar. The dancer may or may not perform; if he is inadept in the steps, he does so for practice. If the hour is not too late, the singers may choose, purely for practice, to beat out a number of the songs of those *kukusiut* who have already performed during the ceremonial season. A meal, provided by the dancer and his family, is then served. The singers next beat out the dancer's song once more and he dances, concluding the evening's performance. Novices and those who have already performed during the season take up their abode in the dancer's house, where they remain for the ensuing four days and nights.

The second day is *nusiutälsap*.[6] Quite early in the morning a herald calls the *kukusiut* to the dancer's house, an invitation accepted by as many as wish to do so. A second song is usually composed and practised in the same manner as on the previous evening. Several *kukusiut* are sent to the forest to cut wood for masks, the number of sections required depending upon the number to be used. In the evening all members of the society assemble to practise the songs.[7] The making of the masks

[5] In Kimsquit called *Alwoläxsem*.

[6] The term *qai-nuqs* is occasionally used for the rites occurring on the day itself.

[7] The rehearsal of the second is sometimes postponed until this time.

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The making of the masks

is allotted to different *kukusiut*, usually in accordance with the dancer's wishes, although a marshal normally gives out the actual tasks. The dancer, or one of his relatives, bestows presents on each person to whom work is allotted. The evening of *nusiutälsap* is called *ämlämkum*.

The third day is *qothm*. Those to whom mask making has been entrusted assemble early in the dancer's house to start their work. About noon they are provided with a meal, to which other *kukusiut* may be invited. By late afternoon, when most of the work has been accomplished, the chips are carefully swept up and burnt, and the house tidied, ready for the uninitiated who will be invited during the evening. On either this day or the one preceding, a platform, with raised sides, is built behind the fire on which the dancer can conceal himself and where he is supposed to remain during the remainder of the four days. About dusk the *kukusiut* are called in; the singers take their places behind the fire, Cannibals, Breakers, and Scratchers are in one of the back corners, where a matting enclosure may have been constructed for them, and the remainder group themselves without distinction around the walls. In Kimsquit, though not in Bella Coola, one or more of the masks may be displayed, suspended from a sloping pole behind the fire. If the singers think it necessary, they may practise the dancer's two songs once more. Then the uninitiated are called in, taking their places near the doorway. The singers beat out one of the dancer's songs and he dances in time to it, and the same is repeated for his second song. After some delay, which appears to be one of the requisites of every *kusiut* performance, the singers strike up the songs of either a novice or a *kusiut*, especially one who has already had a call during the ceremonial season, and the one thus summoned dances to his two songs. Late in the season, when many *kukusiut* have performed, only one song may be used, to prevent the ceremony dragging out to an interminable length, and songs of previous years are omitted. In any case, the ritual lasts for most of the night. When all have danced, the

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uninitiated are expelled, with the exception of the *sisaok* to whom, as guests, a meal is served. Then they too leave and the *kukusiut* eat together. Finally, the singers strike up one of the dancer's songs, and he dances to it to end the evening's rites.

The fourth day is *nebusam*, "That Which Is Opened." During the day the carpenters work to complete the masks, and towards dusk the house is again put in order. The *kukusiut* are summoned again to practise the songs, if necessary, and always to arrange who shall wear the masks, a matter left to the marshals and the carpenters. Then the uninitiated are called in to see the masked figures and watch any dramatic representation. After their exclusion, the masks are burnt. Then the *kukusiut* gather outside the dancer's house where his song is sung once more to send his call back above. Frequently another *kusiut* now receives a call, so that the *nebusam* of one dancer is likewise the *lsuxtämem* for another. The *kukusiut* assemble in the latter's house, but the uninitiated are not allowed to return to that from which they have been ejected until the platform-enclosure has been destroyed at the end of the season.

A word might be said about *kusiut* paraphernalia, although much of this will have to be described in detail for special dances. Boas gives illustrations of a large number of *kusiut* masks and gives such an admirable description of them that little need be added. They are carved from the solid wood, the larger of beech, the smaller of alder, and each carpenter endeavours to make a striking effigy of the being portrayed. *Ăno°likwolsaix* is present at every dance and has become so well standardized that she can always be recognized. This is true, also, for Thunder, Echo, the *haohao*, the Laugher, the Hermaphrodite, and a few other supernatural beings, but so much variation occurs in others that even a *kusiut* of much experience cannot always tell what being is represented. The masks are painted, and sometimes the designs indicate the being, even though the carving fails to do so; verisimilitude is

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not considered necessary. With few exceptions, hereafter to be noted, *kusiut* masks are burnt at the conclusion of each ceremony, a practice which probably originated in order to avoid the possibility of their being seen by the uninitiated. [171] The Bella Coola state that this is one of the most striking differences between their rites and those of the Bella Bella.

Next in importance to masks are whistles (see Plate 2). The large, cone-shaped form used in *susaok* ceremonial is replaced in *kusiut* dances by a smaller type consisting of portions of wood glued together, which can be blown with ease from beneath a concealing blanket. Another type has bellows consisting of a mountain goat bladder, which is held beneath the arm-pit so that it can be worked invisibly. During the summer the whistles are kept by one individual, usually a marshal. Specific information concerning the ownership of these whistles could not be obtained; it appears that any *kusiut* can make one, or have one made for him by a skilled carpenter, and that their retention by one person during the summer is merely for convenience. They are freely lent to anyone for use in a ceremony.

In some dances special objects are used in connection with dramatic performances, such as bull-roarers, wooden representations of animals, birds, or miniature human beings. One old man described a pipe formerly used at *Täl-io*, which had a carved bowl as large as a tea-cup with three radiating stems. It was carved from a knotty excrescence on a beech bole. Little could be learnt of its history, except that it was supposed to have been carved by a chief with the design of his patron and displayed through pride.

The usual guests at a performance of the type just summarized are the dancer's fellow-villagers and any strangers who happen to be present in the town. Great as is the desire of the *kukusiut* to impress their uninitiated tribesmen, they are still more eager to impress strangers, hence the presence of Carriers adds piquancy to the rites. The writer believes that his presence and interest encouraged the Bella Coola to

[see category 116, p 84(B) - ANALYST]

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perform several ancient rites through a desire to "show off" before someone who was ignorant. In recent years there has been a tendency to concentrate on *kusiut* ceremonials, and to judge a man's worth by his lavishness in them, but this is only a modern development due to the prohibition of the potlatch. Nevertheless, even in former times some individuals preferred to invite foreign guests to *kusiut* dances and to give them valuable gifts rather than to save these for potlatches; such a ceremony is called a *kukusiutek*. Whenever strangers are present at a *kusiut* dance they receive small pieces of dyed cedar-bark as proof of the friendly intentions of the host. The general consensus of Bella Coola opinion is that it is foolish for a man to concentrate on *kusiut* performances, particularly if he impoverish himself to the detriment of potlatches.

Although foreign guests are seldom invited to *kusiut* rites, a dancer frequently calls in his fellows from adjacent villages. But as the ceremonial season is simultaneous in the different settlements, with almost nightly performances, it is often impossible to avoid conflict in dates. Which invitation shall have preference is decided in the following manner:

During the days of *qotlum* and *nebusam* the dancer sends a herald of powerful physique to invite guests from as many villages as he wishes. Simultaneously, a messenger may be approaching from the opposite direction with a similar invitation. Each envoy watches carefully around each bend in the path for his rival, and whichever can first call out his message is entitled to continue to give his invitation in the village of the outwitted herald. It is considered exceedingly bad taste to decline a summons, so the ceremony to which the defeated herald was bearing an invitation must be postponed. Sometimes the two messengers sight one another simultaneously, and the relative priority of their messages is then decided by a contest of strength. The rivals stand in the path, shoulder to shoulder, arms close to their sides, and shove with all their strength, the winner being the one who can force his opponent to move his feet. This last means of deciding is used exclu-

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*575 sively when the villages in which the dances are taking place
203 are adjacent or separated by such a short distance that envoys cannot meet *en route*.

*575 A word may be said about the attitude of the Bella Coola
177 to the dances of other coastal tribes. They know that the
829 Bella Bella, Rivers Inlet, Kwakiutl, and Kitkatla people have
[648] *kusiut* societies, but until recently their members were considered to be uninitiated, as Bella Coola were when they visited foreign tribes.[1] A few years ago the Bella Coola, Bella Bella, and Rivers Inlet people decided that their rites were sufficiently akin to permit membership in one tribe to carry with it membership in the others:

"We have now one repository," they say.

This development is due to ease of communication and diminution of population in the three tribes. None the less, the Bella Coola recognize differences between their own rites and those of their neighbours. They say that no other tribe
[171] has repositories; also that in the other tribes the *kusiut* society is more intimately connected with the chiefs, in fact, that in Bella Bella and Fort Rupert the Cannibals are the chiefs, whereas in Bella Coola even a poor man, uninfluential in every other respect, can be one.

*575 Theorization is out of place in a descriptive monograph
177 such as this, but the writer gives it as his personal opinion that
[796] the Bella Coola have adopted much, if not all, of the *kusiut* ceremonial from other coastal tribes, though they have profoundly altered it in respect to certain ancient beliefs connected with localized guardian spirits and the patrons of ancestral families. He further believes that it will be found that this Bella Coola technique has in its turn affected the Bella Bella and Rivers Inlet Indians. There seems little doubt that the
[171] Bella Coola are correct in saying that the society is more im-
[796] portant among them than among their neighbours, and the writer feels that dances and rituals of different types have certainly been adapted to the *kusiut* pattern of the Bella Coola.

[1] Except a few individuals who had inherited foreign prerogatives.

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*575 567 struggling in fear, to the secret meeting-place. Here the marshals discuss what shall be done with him; some suggest that he be killed, others a lesser fate, and finally someone advises his initiation. After apparently due deliberation, this is decided upon; the slave is told the mysteries of the society and is warned of the dire fate which will befall him if he tells the uninitiated of his knowledge. The actual ceremonial rites of admission do not vary according to the preliminaries used.

*575 796 Initiation can take place at any time during the *kusiut* season. After consulting with the marshals in order to choose an evening when no other dance is to take place, the relatives of the neophyte, whom it will be convenient to term X, invite the *kukusiut* to their house. Sometimes songs are sung by way of rehearsal, at other times food is distributed at once. As the people are eating, one of the marshals stands up to address them, saying that X's relatives propose to take him to the repository of the name ————, so that he may become a *kusiut*. X, to whom this may be the first intimation, is called from his house and taken from the village by several of his kinsmen, with one or more of the marshals. The *kukusiut* disperse and tell the uninitiated in the other houses that X has gone to meet *Ăno'likwolsaix*. His companions hear the news with mingled envy and thankfulness that they are not to have this dangerous privilege.

[178] In ancient times X and his guides may actually have proceeded to his repository, but for several generations at least it has been customary for the party merely to go to some lonely spot in the woods for the night. Those accompanying X tell him as much of the ritual of the society as they think fit, not forgetting to emphasize the trust put upon him, and the fate which will befall him if he should communicate his knowledge.

[787 184] He is expected to report that he went to the repository where, lying face downwards on the ground, he saw *Ăno'likwolsaix*; in Kimsquit he is supposed also to see her husband.[9]

[776] [9]According to one old Bella Coola a sister of *Ăno'likwolsaix* also remains in every repository.

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The following morning the *kukusiut* alone are invited to X's house. The marshals meanwhile superintend the laying and lashing of planks across two river dug-outs to form a dancing platform. On this the singers take their places, in addition to as many *kukusiut* as can scramble aboard. The craft is slowly poled either up- or downstream, according to the direction of X's repository, and more *kukusiut* accompany it along the bank; the uninitiated watch with keen interest from the background. X and his companions proceed towards the river and on meeting the lashed-together canoes are taken aboard. The singers strike up any well known *kusiut* tune, and in time to it as many *kukusiut* as possible dance on the platform surmounting the craft. Each uses his own style of dancing according to his prerogative, so that the scene is strikingly varied and animated. X himself cowers in the centre, practically concealed from the uninitiated by the dancers. On reaching the village the whole party hurriedly runs to X's house, from which the uninitiated are rigorously barred for the rest of the day. Those *kukusiut* who accompanied the party along the bank of the river have preceded them and, as X enters, the droning cry is raised which always heralds the appearance of one who has been in close contact with supernatural beings.

If X is considered trustworthy, he may be allowed to go alone to his repository, although this is only customary when he takes a second or third prerogative. If this procedure has been followed, X tells those present what he has seen; otherwise his companions do so. The uninitiated listen eagerly from the adjacent houses, wondering anxiously what is taking place. Several *kukusiut* blow, or use bellow-whistles to increase the awe of the hearers. Presently a herald is sent out. He goes first to the lowest house[10] of the village, then in succession to those above, announcing in each that:

"Something strange has happened to the son of the chief."

X's name is not mentioned; if his father is not a chief the

[10] That is, to the one farthest downstream. By always going to each house in order from bottom to top of the village the herald avoids any danger of omissions.

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call is that something strange has happened to the "mortal." At intervals throughout the day he repeats this announcement, and towards nightfall goes around calling:

Skinap, skinap, kukusiaot, "Cure, cure, ye members of the *kusiut* society, power has come to the son of the chief [or to the mortal]."

The *kukusiut* assemble in X's house, taking their places around the fire; the uninitiated crowd near the doorway. X is seated among his relatives and some of the senior members of the society behind the fire. A herald calls out:

"I want a *siki* to help X."

In every village there are at least two *kukusiut* who have, embodied with their *kusiut* names, the professional prerogative of acting as healer to every novice; it is believed that the ancestor of each obtained a name and this right through a revelation from some supernatural healer. Since that time the owner of the name has been able to insert some of his own ever-present power into a neophyte to enable him to sustain the dangers of admission to the society. This is the fiction taught to the uninitiated. The profession of *siki* can be transmitted by willing like any other prerogative and it occasionally happens that the same individual is *siki* for both *kusiut* and *sisaok*. In answer to the herald's call, the two *siki* come forward and crouch behind the fire, one on either side of it. Their faces are blackened with soot, and each wears a blanket, decorated with dyed cedar-bark, thrown loosely over his shoulders, leaving the chest and stomach bare except for an apron of deer hooves or puffin beaks. Meanwhile beating sticks are distributed among most of the *kukusiut* who strike furiously on the floor with them, without any attempt to keep time; the sole object is to produce the greatest din possible.

One of the *siki* contorts himself in an amazing manner, presses his hands against his stomach as if to force something from it, and rolls from side to side on his haunches, until at length he produces, as if from his body, a rock crystal (see Plate 3). He waves this to and fro in his hands, then goes

[see category 116, p 84(C) - ANALYST]

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through the motion of throwing it to his partner; the crystal disappears! It has been palmed out of sight at the instant of throwing, but the presumption is that it has entered the other *siki* who falls to the floor as if stricken down by the powerful object given to him. Now one of the *kukusiut*, who has been primed for the duty, strikes the recumbent man on the back, restoring him to consciousness. Slowly he pulls himself together, rising at intervals as if crushed beneath a heavy weight, and writhes until he finally produces a rock crystal from his stomach, as if it had been thrown to him. In reality it is his own which he has carried concealed from the beginning of the ceremony. He pretends to throw this to X, often so realistically that the novice blinks, expecting some object to strike him. All this time a *kusiut*, it does not matter who, has been drinking water at intervals and spitting it out over the face of X, "to strengthen him." When X has received the stone, the beating on the floor-boards, stilled during the transference of the crystal, breaks out again with full din. After a short interval the first *siki* stops the noise, goes through the same contortions and produces, apparently from his stomach, another rock crystal, which as before he throws across to his partner who falls down, and later passes it to X. Again the beating on the floor is started. The same ritual is carried out until four, or sometimes only two, rock crystals have been given to X. Then the procedure is reversed. The second *siki* goes to the novice and after much contortion draws from his stomach one of the crystals, which he pretends to throw back to his partner. As the latter makes the motion of catching it, he produces his own crystal which he, so it seems, forces into his own body. This is done for all the crystals (see Plate 4).[1] At this juncture the uninitiated are told to leave.

One of the *siki* now kneads the back of X's neck and goes through the motions of pulling something from it. The frightened youth realizes that his spirit is being drawn from him and his terror, great in any case, is not lessened by the *siki* taking it in his cupped hands to the fire where he scoops up

[1] [see category 116, p84(D) – ANALYST]

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some ashes which he puts into his mouth and chews. Of course he masticates only the ashes but X, unaware of this, is concerned for the fate of his spirit. At last it is restored to him and he is told that the *siki* has altered it from that of an uninitiated person to that of a *kusiut*.[11] The psychological effect of this act on the mind of a young man who has not had time to adjust himself to his new knowledge and who is firmly convinced of the powers of the *siki* is tremendous.

The first *siki* now instructs two *kukusiut* sitting on either side of X to lie down to serve as a seat for him. They do so, irrespective of who they may be. If the novice is still ignorant of the full mysteries of the society, the *siki* announces that he is going to get a call for X. He walks around the house, peering here and there as if seeking something, and then pounces as if he had caught an object between his hands. A whistle is heard, such as the novice knows accompanies the coming of every call; but he does not know that the noise is made by compressing a goat or bear bladder-whistle between two sticks held beneath the armpit. This is the "mystery" of the strange noises.

"Do you know what makes that noise?" ask the two *kukusiut* on whom X is sitting.

If X denies all knowledge, the mystery is explained to him, and he is warned that he will be killed if he communicates the information to uninitiated persons. If he answers that he knows the cause, he is asked who has told him. Perhaps some lad has been peeking and has told X of what he has seen; in that case the over-inquisitive youth is at once initiated to prevent further leakage of information. As soon as X has learnt the great secret he moves to one side and the singers take their positions behind the fire. His father, or whoever it may be from whom he is to obtain his name, then stands up and unfolds its origin, telling which supernatural being is his patron, and the locality of his repository. X sometimes re-

[11] This part of the rite has been omitted for so many years that many of the middle-aged *kukusiut* have forgotten it.

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X sometimes re-
ceives two prerogatives at his initiation, one from each parent, 575*
or from some other interested relative. In this case both are 796
expounded. The singers listen intently, knowing that they [425]
will later be called upon to compose songs on the theme, or [553]
themes. According to some informants they immediately sing [533]
one, as if they had just created it, though it was really prepared
in advance. The *kukusiut* listen until they have mastered it.

Helpers now distribute the food provided by X's father, 575*
or whoever is responsible for his initiation. At every *kusiut* 796
ceremonial the marshals are the first recipients, then the
singers, and finally the others without distinction. As the 556
guests are eating, X's father gives presents to all, without [264]
deference to rank. An announcer calls out:

"Here are [for example] ten bear-skins from X's mother. They are to obtain for him his cedar-bark bracelets."

These goods are then distributed. Similarly other gifts from various relatives are handed out for his anklets, his blanket, his collar, his head-dress, and all other parts of his clothing. As each item of his ceremonial costume is validated, [425]
X dons the prepared article. A novice's head-dress consists [292]
of a round roll of dyed cedar-bark, covering a grass frame; in [184]
Stuux and the other villages of the upper valley this is decor-
ated with a tuft of swan's down. The *kukusiut* of these villages [237]
also wear a distinctive decoration consisting of a swan's skin
with the feathers attached. In recent years it has been cus-
tomary to pile all the goods together and distribute them as *ălq·ĭl*, which has the significance of "something that has van-
ished for the novice's dyed cedar-bark." Theoretically, the aim of the donor is to bestow his presents on all equally, but if he finds that he has some remaining, he gives these to the chiefs, or to the relatives of someone whom he expects will soon be a novice. None of the goods used in general distributions are returnable, but a chief who receives an extra gift at the end usually remembers from whom it was received and cancels his indebtedness at the earliest opportunity. There is no close connection between the disbursements and the worth of the

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individual, other than an indefinite recollection of the amount of goods used for his dyed cedar-bark. People always have sufficient goods to validate *kusiut* prerogatives; in fact, if a proud person gives too lavishly to confirm the initiation of a relative, the marshals sometimes burn the goods, giving no explanation other than that the uninitiated must not be led to believe that a *kusiut* ceremony is an affair of wealth like a potlatch. Formerly, goods were given only at initiation ceremonies, but between 1880 and 1890 a chief gave presents, instead of food, at a dance. His example was followed, since none was willing to be outdone, although such gifts are still called "food." The name of the donor is always announced, whether he is the dancer himself or one of his relatives.

X, though now a member of the *kusiut* society, is still a novice and cannot give a dance[12] until the next ceremonial season, that is, until one year has elapsed. The marshals instruct him about his costume, and about the manner in which he must deport himself during this period, matters which depend to a considerable extent upon his prerogative. If he is a Cannibal, Scratch, or Breaker dancer he must not eat unsmoked salmon, nor must he enter a house in which either a potlatch or a memorial potlatch is taking place.[13] Failure to obey this injunction would warrant punishment from a foreign tribe. Unless his prerogative is to give one of these, or the Ghost dance, he must keep his face constantly blackened. Every novice must wear a collar of dyed cedar-bark. The marshals warn him to be circumspect in dealing with uninitiated persons; he can talk to them, but it is most improper for him to engage in any familiarity or frivolous play. Above all, he must neither gamble nor take part in non-athletic games,

[12] A Cannibal novice, however, begins to exercise his prerogative immediately, although he must also perform a complete dance the following year.

[13] This prohibition was once broken at *Lomo·ts*. A skilled leader was required to arrange the texts at a memorial potlatch and the only man fit for the purpose, a resident of *Sunut*, was a Cannibal novice. After much deliberation he was called upon, but great care was taken to hide his identity and it was years before the infraction became known.

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prohibitions that last not for one year, but for four. X is not subject to any other restraints. If he wishes to go hunting he can remove his cedar-bark collar and hang it for convenience in the forest near his village, redonning it on his return. The *kukusiut* show considerable interest in their new member, not only by warning him what he must not do, but by teaching him how to dance and to growl or make other of the necessary, but unusual, noises. During the remainder of the ceremonial season X is required to attend every *kusiut* dance, thereby learning much of the ceremonial, and during the following summer his relatives, especially if food is plentiful, frequently invite the *kukusiut* to their house. The singers beat out well-known tunes, or practise those which will be required for the following winter; if a song has been composed for X he dances in time to it, in the style proper to his prerogative. Formerly, when there were many novices, dances of this type took place frequently and were useful in giving constant practice to singers and neophytes alike. As no calls from supernatural patrons can come at this time of year, it follows that all such dances are of a non-sacred nature, although the uninitiated are excluded. During his period as a novitiate, X has one privilege; he can take food from anyone at any type of ceremony. It is remembered that one novice was even bold enough to take food which had been placed as an offering for the dead.

575* 784 524 525 575* 533 535 575* 264

When the next *kusiut* season opens, X attends every performance. This is probably the most thrilling and nerve-racking period in his life. He does not know exactly when he will be allowed to give his dance, since that is a matter of arrangement between his relatives and the marshals, but he knows that the time will soon be at hand. When the great day, or rather night, actually comes, X is usually in a state of abject terror. The rite itself does not differ from those about to be described except that the first song relates the manner in which X found the repository. But the mental attitude of X differs greatly from that of an old performer. One informant,

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a woman about sixty years of age, vividly recalled her fears when she, a young woman, gave her first performance. It was the Dance of *Winwina* (II, p. 187), in which she had to call out loudly when a large number of uninitiated persons, including Carrier Indians, were present. One of the marshals was her great-uncle and he had carefully taught her what she was to say. A few minutes before the time for her announcement he came to where she lay hidden in an enclosure behind the fire:

"Do you see your relatives here?" he said. "Look at your father, your mother, and your uncles. If you fail to say what you are expected to say, they will all die in a few weeks, and so will you. Be bold!"

The woman asserted that it was the most terrifying experience in her whole life because, though she knew there was deception in the rites, she also knew the power of the society and that the threat of death in case of error was no idle one. She was so frightened that she forgot the carefully learnt words and it required the prompting of the hidden marshal to get her through the ordeal.

But once the first rite has been successfully negotiated, it is a proud day for the novice. He feels himself a real *kusiut* and glories in his superiority over his former associates. For the rest of the season he, like everyone else who has performed a dance, must attend every rite. Energetic novices sometimes give their dances on two, or even three, successive years, though usually a man allows five or six to elapse between displays.

If X should die during the year's interval between his initiation and his first dance, he is secretly buried by his fellow *kukusiut* without the customary mourning rites, and with no uninitiated persons present at the grave. His song, if one has been composed for him, is sung softly, and he is interred adorned with his collar of dyed cedar-bark. During the next ceremonial season, that at which he should have danced, it is necessary for a brother, or other near relative, to receive a call since it is felt that a dance once begun must be completed,

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*533 in the following examples. The subdivisions as called out by the announcer are separated by vertical lines and, where possible, a translation of each is given. The sounds of wordless choruses were not recorded. The different types are arranged according to order of mention in this monograph.

Sisaok Songs

*533 575 796 The themes of *sisaok* songs differ according to the purpose for which they have been composed. For instance, when a young person is being initiated into the society, the words usually refer to his crest, the *tutwinam* which brought his song; at potlatches, to the goods which will soon be given away and the phrasing is often grandiloquent; sometimes the two concepts are combined. These differences are clearly shown in the examples which follow. A few *sisaok* songs have been preserved for generations, but most are newly composed for each winter season and the old ones forgotten. Since few rites of this type have been carried out during recent years, it was difficult to obtain complete versions.

*533 *Song Used by Wilnlks (a) of Kimsquit when Initiated into the Society (b)*

A Litwamaxywa·o	*stä'ähsaolt*	*skälpolmipdai(c)*	*didahända*
Go out	ye citizens	to see	the arrival

disiutsäls
of my supernatural being.

[WORDLESS CHORUS] (*d*)

B Diqwisandai	*daklähmdus*	*dikukpilsdai*	*dikastlwalamstoms*
That is what	brought down	my grandfather(*e*)	and has left for me(*f*)
Alkälwmildjudax	*mnmmtcanai*	*mnmmtcanai*	*kätciktapqwinndai*
Be careful	my children	my children	it will spear you
dalP'lähmdai	*dikwalnntälsaiyla*		
what has come to me	my crest(*g*).		

[WORDLESS CHORUS]

C Yexadusdax	*didiqaondai*	*didiqaoxdai*	*Diqaxäxä-mihnalo*
Shame him	the unsuccessful one(*h*)	the unsuccessful one.	He desires

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[701] prerogative, he was debarred from seclusion in the back-room and consequent initiation as a *sisaok*. The exact relationship between warriors and members of
[575] the *sisaok* society is obscure.
[424] (*b*) *Laxaiyao·k'* is a Kitkatla name from the north. The first owner moved to Kitlobe where he married, and the designation was transmitted to his descendants.
[177] One of the latter migrated to Kimsquit, where the name has since been handed down from generation to generation though its original source has not been forgotten.

(*c*) Recorded as song VII D 36, National Museum of Canada; singer, Jim Pollard. This song is said to have been used about 1870.

(*d*) Vocative form.

(*e*) That is: I double my importance. This kind of expression is popular among chiefs.

[424] (*f*) *Lowi* is one of the ancestral names of Raven, the dancer's crest. In thus addressing the bird, he called attention to his ancestral history.
[262] (*g*) The home of the first *Laxaiyao·k'* was near a point where dead whales often drifted ashore. The dancer likens himself to a whale on which people will dine.

(*h*) Such repetition is not uncommon. The dancer implies that his wealth will be divided in a manner similar to the cutting up of a whale's carcass.

(*i*) A promontory owned by the first *Laxaiyao·k'*.

(*j*) That is: I summon people [to a feast.]

(*k*) An invitation not to be taken too literally.

Xe·tla Songs

The tunes of *xe·tla* songs are believed to have been handed down, unaltered, for many generations. The words, too, are frequently ancient although the singers sometimes make slight changes so that they will be more suitable for the chief in whose honour they are being sung. Owing to the decline of ceremonials in which they were used, few *xe·tla* songs are now
●[796] remembered.

Xe·tla Song Used by *Sinuɣɛl* of Kimsquit(*a*)

[727]

A Alinaɣwee	*Ahlxwaɬ'aiɬdai*	*Di staltaidmɣdai*	*dänuilumik*
Come!	See!	The chief	a man stands in the bow(*b*)

di yälxotsaɬ'aikdai
of those who travelled everywhere.

[WORDLESS CHORUS]

B Alaiqwalnɛɣaoits	*dä'änänuskxilsdax*	*aiyatätpämäthaisdax*
He did so,	my pattern(*c*),	whence I came(*d*);

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ɣmusmălɬxwanuɣsi	*aiyuwasoyo·nɣwaĭs*
he circled and returned	*Songʷ*.

[WORDLESS CHORUS]

C The third part of this song has been forgotten.

(*a*) Recorded as song VII D 39a, National Museum of Canada; singer, Jim Pollard.
(*b*) A sign of victory, eagerly watched for when a war-party is returning. [727]
(*c*) A reference to *Wixut*, one of *Sinuɣsti*'s first ancestors in the beginning of time. He made a journey to the Skeena, returning from there with canoe and paddles decorated with sun designs. The exploits of his descendant are compared with those of his pattern, that is, his first forbear. Such references to family history are sources of pride to the chief being honoured. [773]
(*d*) That is: From whom I am descended.

Fragment of a Xe·tla Song(a) Used by Qwoyusditsas of Kimsquit(b)

A *Kaiyumsămălsan*	*di stălaiămɣdai*	*kaiiɬainuxits*
Presently he will be ashamed	that chief	if I get

aiyadilăliaĭsdai
my copper.

(*a*) Both tune and theme are said to be of Kwakiutl origin. [177]
(*b*) Recorded as song VII D 34b, National Museum of Canada; singer, Jim Pollard.

Fragment of a Xe·tla Song Used by Sinuɣsti of Kimsquit(a)

A Sănusikqomoĭsandai	*yao (b) diḳɣetcaiyailtumdai*	*Oldiḳaxlămitlisandai*
They are smiling,	greetings to the out-stretched glass!	They drink

sewăs qomcuadju
the food of white men(*c*).

[WORDLESS CHORUS]

B and *C* have been forgotten.

(*a*) Recorded as song VII D 41b, National Museum of Canada; singer, Jim Pollard.
(*b*) Literally: *Hello*!
(*c*) This song was used at a potlatch where the fare provided was whisky. The tune is said to be very ancient although new words were composed for the occasion. [556] [273]

A'alk Songs

A'alk songs somewhat resemble *sisaok* ones and, like them, are difficult to collect completely. Parts of many are remem- [575] [796]

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*533 [575] [796] bered, but the rites in which they were used have been practically discontinued for several years so that unabridged versions are almost impossible to obtain. *A'alk* themes vary according to the ceremonies in which they are used. For potlatches, they consist of incidents from ancestral myths; whereas for non-ceremonial occasions following the *kusiut* season, they deal with current events. The following examples are divided into these two classes.

THEMES DRAWN FROM ANCESTRAL MYTHS

Qi'aqa Song Used for Nuximəllaix, a Man of Kimsquit(a)

A Yeyutsāmatətəlaix — They give valuable counsel, | *dialimilsudai* — my goods(*b*); | *dxɬwunlaixdsuldai* — they formulate their own opinion

oldiɬomātsdulsdai | *aiyaskāt·aiāmkilsdai* | *oldiamtainutilsdai*
concerning to whom of those seated in my house I shall give presents(*c*).

[WORDLESS CHORUS]

B Kā'alsiyusdjmalsandja — I speak loftily | *skakilɬimodjmils* — of everything(*d*). | *Wasāltwinmodjdumant'* — Through them(*e*)

silɬwalstliwads·uals — I become elevated, | *ithmstaiāmdids·ls* — my power to give potlatches [is] | *aiyawamān·uksalsals* — my male relatives(*f*).

[WORDLESS CHORUS]

C Kānunukāwālmidsmals — Presently I shall stand | *dusnuɬ'ɬānāls·kidax* — within the box | *dununulɬānemts·kidax* — at the corner door(*g*),

sxālxāldimutdāmkis — where flowed to all(*h*) | *dusnuskmnāls·kidax* — the moose-skins(*i*) | *ƛwalosdimutsdax* — of *Ƭwalosdimut*(*j*)(*k*).

(*a*) Recorded as song VII D 31a, National Museum of Canada; singer, Jim Pollard.

(*b*) That is: The goods which I am about to distribute advise me. This statement is not to be taken literally.

(*c*) It was impossible to obtain a translation of each subdivision.

(*d*) Refers to the dancer's many prerogatives.

(*e*) Refers to his male relatives.

[424] [773] (*f*) The dancer had obtained several prerogatives from ancestors, traced patrilineally.

(*g*) A reference to the dancer's origin myth (I, p. 329). The house of his first forefather, *ɯyuyuyut*, had its door in a back corner instead of the centre front.

(*h*) That is: Whence were distributed at potlatches.

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*533 *B* *Sāəsiɬxtxugwəə* | *ēlāsulɬs* | *skā'alpsdulɬsdai* | *dismāt-ampdjɬ*
Go within | my house, | I am giving food | to my friends.

[WORDLESS CHORUS]

C The third part of this song has been forgotten.

[614] [424] [685] (*a*) Recorded as song VII D 28b, National Museum of Canada; singer, Jim Pollard. It is said that this song has been handed down for generations in an ancestral family; they now regard it as a family possession and would consider its use by others to be stealing.

[609] (*b*) Many years ago a solitary Bella Bella used to paddle to Kimsquit almost every year. He was dressed like a chief and had the mien of one, so that his hosts assumed him to be a person of importance. It was later found that he was a poor man. The mocking of foreigners is a common theme of *a'alk* songs.

am'hl-a Song Used for Xɑmxɑmlaix(a)

*533 575 578 *A* *Nuiwulukāxānamqualsan* | *sitxwosmaiklla*
He has fallen so that his buttocks are uppermost, | Hail(*b*)!

Damanmulsan-imut | *skusiutas*
He has come to hurt, | that *kusiut*(*c*).

[WORDLESS CHORUS]

B and *C*. The second and third parts have been forgotten.

(*a*) Recorded as song VII D 3c, National Museum of Canada; singer, Jim Pollard.

(*b*) A mockingly deferential salutation used in *a'alk* songs describing the *kukusiut*.

(*c*) *Xɑmxɑmlaix* was an *a'alk* who is said to have seen a Cannibal *kusiut* when the latter was supposed to be in the land above. A song was composed about the incident, and the above fragment has been remembered for many years. *Xɑmxɑmlaix* was initiated into the *kusiut* society; see vol. II, p. 265.

*533 575 •796 203 As already described, whenever a dancer is performing, the women utter a peculiar high-pitched drone and the heralds call out remarks suitable to the occasion. A phonograph record[1] was made of the drone, followed by a cry suitable for either *ɔɔsaok* or *a'alk* dances. The following words are virtually sung:

Yalosāldimut | *sāāmgakais*
Do not err, | chiefs.

[1]Recorded as song VII D 29c, National Museum of Canada.

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Nusäxkämx Songs

The texts of *nusäxkämx* songs are fragmentary and unsatisfactory. The rites in which they were used have long been discontinued and, since they were never ceremonially important; there was nothing to impress either tunes or words on the minds of the singers. In addition, it is probable that the songs were always less carefully constructed than those of other types.

Song Used for Qolon(a), a Kimsquit Man(b)

Qixänaowitaiya	*sîhmstänäkcistaiya*	*sätwinmlsndai*	
Be happy,	ye people,	it is about to come,	
däsqwluyumdai	*däqolonlaotcaiya*		
that hidden one(c),	Beaver.		

[WORDLESS CHORUS]

Qoloni'i	*Qoloni'i*	*wa·xai·yai*
Beaver(d)!	Beaver!	*wa·xai·yai*(e).

(a) This word means "Beaver." It is most unlikely that it was the dancer's own designation, more probably a nickname used in connection with the *nusäxkämx* rite.
(b) Recorded as song VII D 9b, National Museum of Canada; singer, Louie Hall.
(c) This signifies a person who is hidden ceremonially, such as a *kusiut* dancer who has gone to the land above. The dancer expected to be a Cannibal and the rite in which this song was used served as a kind of rehearsal.
(d) This refrain replaces a second and third part of the song itself.
(e) A meaningless series of choral ejaculations.

Song Used for a Kimsquit Woman(a)

Axnnxpdimqwduks	*Hopiwacsudax*	*tuxwismaoskidax*	*ähusmätskidax*
They heard	of Fawn(b),	when they were playing	long ago(c).

(a) Recorded as song VII D 9d, National Museum of Canada; singer, Jim Pollard.
(b) The theme being of a fawn, the dancer wore a deer-skin.
(c) As in many *nusäxkämx* songs, the words refer to an ancient story, probably one describing the adventures of deer and wolves; see vol. II, p. 425.

Song Used for W'aoxsqlaix, a Kimsquit Man(a)

Lilitwmustnimx	*waawnxqsäx-ai*	*waiytski*	*sqolänops*	
Run in all directions,	ye dogs,	for the first time	it is there	
nanupaolnim	*ozuitäyänam*	*maoitc*	*maoitc*	
he brings much food(b),	go below the house	h(c)	h(d).	

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CHAPTER III

WARFARE[1]

General Observations — Specific Accounts

General Observations

721 PRIOR to the establishment of British rule, there was con-
648 siderable warfare among the coastal tribes of British Columbia. Long-continued struggles leading to the extermination of one or other of the participants were unknown, but there were constant raids, counter-raids, forays, and attacks. These were never as continuous as on the Plains, where martial achievements were regarded more highly than on the coast, but it appears probable that at least several villages of the Bella Coola were embroiled every few years. Nevertheless,
[796] war was secondary in importance to ceremonial rites. During the winter, peace reigned and members of hostile tribes were
[556] even received as guests at some dances. At potlatches they might be subjected to insult, later to be avenged in the same manner or by active hostility, but seldom was actual violence offered either to envoys or guests. The symbol of peace and
726 friendliness was eagle down; the occupants of a canoe who
825 bore an invitation to a potlatch, or who were guests them-
778 selves, used to blow this substance up into the air whenever
[486] another craft approached, and it was incumbent on the latter
[578] to veer over to the other side of the channel. Eagle down was
[627] considered to be so sacred that when two men were quarrelling a chief could stop them by blowing some of it over their heads.
721 In winter, hostilities were prevented by ceremonies, and in summer the people were usually busy laying in supplies of food; consequently, it was only in the late spring that fighting was
[575] at all common. Even then the dictates of ceremonial life were
[622] not entirely forgotten; no *kusiut* novice went to war and

[1] Warfare having long been discontinued, the past tense is used throughout this chapter.

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sionally, in a half-hearted manner, but it is not unusual for a man to allow the basin of water in which he makes his ablutions to remain standing for two or three weeks. Not many years ago the Carriers taught their neighbours to make a kind of soap from the ashes of burnt cottonwood sticks thrown into water; with this clothes are washed irregularly and in most cases from sheer necessity only. In former times bathing was a semi-sacred rite, but this fell into disuse with the passing of the old religion, and the use of soap and water merely for the sake of cleanliness has not become a daily habit. The women have more vanity; the younger girls especially like to have new clothes, though they wear them carelessly, heedless of fit. An effort is often made to clean up for ceremonial dances, but it entails little more than the removal of the more obvious dirt and the putting on, over unchanged undergarments, of a sweater. Pride in personal appearance, love of tidiness, delight in a clean house, are all quite foreign to the Bella Coola.

Probably the reason for lack of comforts in the houses is simply that the people do not feel the need for them. They consider it no hardship to sit on a rickety chair, scoop up food from a common dish and, if they think of it, throw morsels down to the dog or the cat. The smell, the flies, the dirt, the chaos do not concern them. Capable of undergoing privations, hardships, and even sufferings, they think neither of the comfort of themselves nor of others. Their domestic animals are often treated abominably, not through lack of affection or cruelty, but from callousness. More than once the writer has seen a favourite dog steal a piece of food from the table. Its master, after a furious blow or kick at it, would suddenly, as if by inspiration, throw a choice bit to the animal, saying:

"Why, he must have been hungry!"

Though the Bella Coola feel a kinship with animals unknown to the white man, it is not combined with any recognition of their feelings as living creatures. There are, of course, many exceptions, but on the whole public opinion demands generosity and kindness only towards human members of the group. The moral code is not concerned with animals.

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to their forefathers. Profound as these material changes have been, those of a psychological nature have been even more important. New worlds have been thrown open to them, stimulating ideas have been brought to their attention, and they have realized for the first time that the world is infinitely larger than they had imagined. Hand in hand with this extension of knowledge has gone disbelief in their own ancient lore. The white man, whose superiority and mechanical skill they admit, positively denies the actuality of their mythology, and laughs at the dramatic performances which were wont to fill the winter with engrossing interest. Such rites can flourish only in an attitude of profound belief: this has been so shaken that the dances continue listlessly, a mere shadow of a once living art. The young people were the first to embrace a scepticism that has rapidly grown into disbelief of the faith of their ancestors, and a half-concealed scorn for their elders, the upholders of the old customs. Worst of all, prohibition of the potlatch has made it impossible for a man to reach a position of social eminence. Moreover, since the holding of any type of ceremonial requires a distribution of gifts, formal gatherings of all kinds have become virtually impossible; even marriages have no longer the social support that formerly made them so lasting.

These cumulative blows would be enough to shake any civilization, and that of the Bella Coola has been entirely unable to adjust itself to the new conditions. The young people, having lost respect for their elders, are deprived of the advice and support essential to the continuity of culture. They ape the white man's dress; they want his mechanical devices, but have failed to assimilate them. For example, a gramophone in a Bella Coola house is an anachronism, while several similar articles spoil the old picture but do not provide a new one. Seeking to copy the new ways thrown open to them, they have achieved the outward show but not the substance, and in so doing have destroyed their own culture. In the old days they were ambitious to hold potlatches and willing to work steadily towards that goal; now, new desires have not kept pace with

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[426] *alewekam:* Excess of amount returned over that previously received as an investment present.
Aiamkikhs: One of the nine supernatural siblings.
Aiislaxa: 1—Supernatural beings who drone as the sun moves.
2—Voice of the supernatural woman, *Snitsmâ·s*; the term is occasionally applied to the being herself. The sound is produced by *kusiut* whistles.
Aimâlaila: One of the nine supernatural siblings.
Aimalhus: "The Coming of Foul Weather," in the language of supernatural beings: The phenomenon is semi-anthropomorphized.
Aimâ·ti: 1—Village in the lower Bella Coola valley.
2—Ancient chief from whom the village is supposedly named.
Aiqnaiexamlaix: *Kusiut* name of a Bella Coola man; the designation is of Kwakiutl origin.
[821] *Aiqwaiast:* Supernatural beings who blacken the face of the moon at eclipses.
Ailxamka: 1—One of the first women to settle at *Tal·ío* in the beginning of time.
2—Daughter of an *ustâmq* chief mentioned in an ancient story.
Aiutla: 1—One of the designations of *Kâmai·ti*, the mysterious supernatural woman.
2—Ferocious, awe-inspiring, *adjective.*
[526] *alaxya:* Swing consisting of two long ropes with cross-seat.
[824] *alpaduktl·x:* Spruce leaves.
Amatci: *Kusiut* name of a Bella Coola man.
alpeamam: Lehal.
Alxaiakh: 1—One of the first men to settle at Calvert Island in the beginning of time.
2—One of the first men to settle at *Nuxwâlst* in the beginning of time.
3—One of the first men to settle at *Aimâ·ti* in the beginning of time.
alxdjalas: Stake supporting olachen net.
● [796] *alxufpitmam:* Ritual repeated at intervals between the allotment of tasks for a potlatch, and the coming of a supernatural being to the first *nusut* initiate.
alt", plural, mealt"ats: Herald.
Alxtâmam: *Kusiut* name of a Bella Coola man.
[533] *alus:* Third part of song.
'alus: Pleasure expedition of boys and girls to the forest.
[517] *Alus:* Name of an isolated star.
[82] *Alquthus:* Supernatural man-eater, patron of Cannibals.
Alqualas: Stick decorated with abalone-shell used by one of the settlers in the upper Bella Coola valley in the beginning of time.
Alqwalus: Supernatural female berry-picker resident in the land of the dead.
alsaia: Announcer.
Alsatsalaw·s: Bay of the Thousand Islands near Namu.
Alsxhmaix: *Kusiut* name of a Bella Coola man.
alsxtla: Cannibal.
[387] *alsxualtm:* Marriage with sister of a deceased wife; the word is undoubtedly connected with the verb, *to bequeath.*
Alstwix: Supernatural creature similar to a human being.
Altlis: Supernatural woman, wife of Cold Wind and mother of Ice.
Altsiks: Bella Bella man mentioned in an ancient story.
[425] *alxt'tlaw:* The transference of a name, during the period of engagement, from the father of the future bridegroom to the father of the future bride.
[553]
[514]

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nixwāsta: Intangible *kusiut* prerogative consisting of the insertion of some object into the digestive tract. [424]

Nixŋs: Expert supernatural dancer; to his associates he is a yearling mountain goat.

nmlx or *nmlxmut:* First complete dance given by a *kusiut* initiate. [825]

mmmk: Mammal, any kind.

Nnixwanaix: One of the names of Great Blue Heron as chief.

Noakila: 1—One of the first men to settle on the upper Dean in the beginning of time.
2—One of the first men to settle at *Snaioli* in the beginning of time.

Noākŋmm: Supernatural being who brings the salmon.

Noamtaxait: Name given to his grandson by one of the first settlers at *Sixkiut* in the beginning of time.

nolcista: *Kusiut* prerogative as a Breaker; this is said to be a Bella Bella term.

nolyāka: Sloping stick extending from floor to roof behind the fire on which, at Kimsquit, *kusiut* masks are hung.

nomnak: The making and use of hand nets for olachen.

Nonodjanōstem: 1—"The Adviser": One of the names of the supreme god. [622]
2—Chiefs of a village, collectively; virtually, "The Sages."

no'onātlim: 1—Ceremony at which *nsook* names are validated in the eyes of the fellow-villagers. [553]
2—Any ceremony at which all kinds of dances are performed. [796]

no'ondjut: Assemblage of the *kukusiut* to practise difficult rites.

No-ḳuna, "The One with Thick Pubic Hair": *Tlaiyakam* name given to a deserting wife.

Nowakila: One of the names of Raven as chief.

nowalrikulum: Sentence of death passed by the *kukusiut* on one of their fellows as punishment for an error. [688]

nuaiyas: A loan, especially of an ancestral right. [426]

Nuālalnum: Synonym for *Noākŋmm,* the supernatural being who brings the salmon.

Nu'aas, "Inhospitable": Name taken by a woman in consequence of slights received from her husband's relatives.

nuāḳsuta: Toilet-hole.

nuaska: Birth. [821]

Nuchkāqas: Anthropomorphized evil cold wind. [769]

nudzi-as: Rhetorical term of respect for aged dead.

nudzi-as du ihmsta: 1—High tide. [823]
2—Long life.

nudjiqsta: Cross-piece tied to canoe to hold olachen-net post steady while being driven.

Nu'cymāj, "Place of Foul Water": Village in the lower Bella Coola valley.

Nuxā": 1—Village at head of South Bentinck Arm, on the east side.
2—River flowing into head of South Bentinck Arm from the east.

Nuxalmabais: Synonym for *Sximaxinult,* an immoral supernatural woman.

nuḳal: The achievement of success against supernatural odds; the term is used with reference to the solutions of the riddles of the Mystery dance.

nukamuxumum: Any non-sacred dance held at the conclusion of the *kusiut* season. [535]

Nukw-su: An influential Kwakiutl chief.

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are grouped in pairs, and are believed to paint their faces with designs representing moon, stars, and rainbow. In the Kû'siût these deities make their appearance, and are represented by masks which I have copied. Qē'mtaioa and Qēmqēmalē'otla wear the design of the full moon, indicated in the mask Qē'mtaioa (fig. 4) by a double curved line in red and black, the black outside, passing over forehead, cheeks, and upper lip. Qēmqēmalē'otla has a double curved line in red and black, the red outside, which passes over forehead, cheeks, and chin (fig. 5). Aiumkī'likya (fig. 6) and Aiumalē'otla (fig. 7) wear the design of the crescent, drawn

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FIG. 6.—Mask representing Aiumkī'likya.

FIG. 7.—Mask representing Aiumalē'otla.

in red and black, with differences similar to those between the first and second. The fifth, K'ōmk'ōmkī'likya, and K'ō'mtaioa have designs representing stars (fig. 8), both wearing the same style of mask. The seventh is K'ak'quaxa, whose face represents the blossom of a salmonberry bush (fig. 9). The next in order, Kuk'lina (=who wants to have blankets first), wears the design of the rainbow in black and blue (fig. 10). The ninth, Aē'nmī'k wears on the head a mask representing a kingfisher, and is clothed in a birdskin blanket. The last of the series is a woman called Tl'ōtsī'xpētlāma (=the eater), the sister of all the others. Her face is painted with a bladder filled with grease (fig. 11). She figures in several legends as stealing provisions and pursued by the people whom she has robbed.

The Sīsaū'kx, which is danced at potlatches and other festivals of greater, is presided over by a being that lives in the sun. A man who had gone out hunting met the Sīsaū'kx, and was instructed by him in the secrets of the dance. When he returned he asked the people to clean their houses, and to strew them with clean sand, before he consented to enter. Then he danced the Sīsaū'kx, and told the people what he had seen. He said that the being had commanded them to perform this dance and to adorn themselves when dancing with carved headdresses with

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trails of ermine skins, and to swing carved rattles. The man, later on, returned to the sun. Ever since that time the Bilqula dance the Sisaun'kH. Besides this it is stated that the Raven gave each gens its secrets.

FIG. 8.—Mask representing K·'ómk·'ómkt'likya.

FIG. 9.—Mask representing K·ula'qawa.

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Each gens has its peculiar carvings, which are used in the Sisaun'kH only, and are otherwise kept a deep secret, *i.e.*, they are the sacred posses-

FIG. 10.—Mask representing Kulé'lias.

FIG. 11.—Mask representing Tl'étsä'aplétläna.

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sions of each gens. All gentes, however, wear the beautiful carved headdresses and use the raven rattles, regardless of the carving they represent.

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out by the strong breeze blowing in the higher regions. He is quite naked, and bites everyone whom he can lay hold of. If he cannot catch anyone he will bite his own arm. It is believed that he has lost his soul, which fled from the body when the spirit came to him. Therefore the shamans must try for four days to recapture his soul. The night after they have recovered it the ɛlaqō'tla dances clothed in a bear-skin and wearing a large headring, heavy bracelets and anklets, all made of red and white cedar-bark. Some ɛlaqō'tla do not bite people, but merely devour raw salmon, or tear dogs to pieces and devour them. Those who bite people will also eat corpses. The ɛlaqō'tla has to observe a number of regulations. For four years after his initiation he must not gamble. He must stay away from his wife for one year, but this period is being reduced to one month. For two or three months he must not leave his house.

The Ō'lɛq (= the laugher) and the Dā'tia (= the thrower) do not go into the woods to be initiated, but both must fast three days before their first dance. The Ō'lɛq 'makes fun of everything' and scratches people with his nails. The Dā'tia carries stones and sticks, and breaks household goods and canoes. If he has destroyed some object during the day he pays for it at night when he dances. The Ōlɛq and the Dā'tia must stay for one month, after they have danced, in their houses.

If a person transgresses the laws of the Kū'siūt, for instance when the ɛlaqō'tla gambles, or when a man performs a dance to which he has no right, also when a person derides the ceremonies or makes a mistake in dancing, his punishment is death. The chiefs assemble in council and the offender is called before the court. After his offence has been proved he is asked whether he is willing to suffer the penalty of death. If he is not willing, and one of his relatives is found willing to take the penalty on himself, the guilty party is spared, and the substitute is killed in his stead. The execution of the judgment is entrusted to the shaman, who bewitches the condemned person by throwing disease into him, or by poisoning him in some other (supernatural?) way. The object thrown by the shaman is a shell, bone, or finger-nail, around the middle of which objects a human hair is tied. If this object strikes the offender he will fall sick. Blood collects in his stomach, and if it so happens that he vomits this blood, and with it the disease-producing object, he will recover, and is not molested any further. The masks (not the whistles and other ornaments) used in the Kū'siūt are burnt immediately at the close of each dancing season. Novices must wear a necklet of red cedar-bark over their blankets for a whole year. The masks used in the dances represent mythical personages, and the dances are pantomimic representations of myths. Among others the thunder-bird and his servant Atlqulā'tɛnum, who wears a mask with red and blue stripes over the whole face from the right-hand upper side to the left-hand lower side, and a staff with red and blue spiral lines, appear in the dances. Prominent masks are also Qē'mtsiɔa and his brothers and his sister (see p. 412), Masmasalā'niq and his fellows, the raven and the Nusqē'mta, and many others.

Customs regarding Birth, Puberty, Marriage, and Death.

When the time of delivery approaches, the woman leaves the house and resorts to a small hut built for the purpose. She is assisted by pro-

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776 the House of Myths, but who has given up his place in favor of SEnx and
ALk'unta'm. These two might be called the rulers of mankind. In most
traditions they are described as trying to destroy man, notwithstanding the
fact that they are considered the creators of mankind. This peculiar charac-
773 teristic of these deities is clearly brought out in the traditions recorded on
776 pp. 78 ff. In one legend which I collected in 1890, ALk'unta'm's mother,
Nunusomik·ecqonz'm, is described as a Cannibal, who inserts her long
snout in the ears of man, and sucks out his brain. Eventually she was
transformed into the mosquito.[1] I did not hear her mentioned as one of the
deities residing in the House of Myths. According to the same tradition,
the salmon were obtained by a man who gambled with ALk'unta'm, the
stake being the salmon. ALk'unta'm lost, and the man took the salmon down
[825] from heaven. Another legend of the origin of the salmon is recorded on p. 38,
where it is told how the birds obtained the salmon. According to still another
tradition (p. 94), the Raven obtained the salmon by marrying a salmon girl.
In the tradition quoted above, ALk'unta'm also gives to man the power to cure
[755] disease by means of the water of life, which the shaman sprinkles on the
sick person.

776 A number of inferior deities live in the House of Myths. They might
[772] be called the assistants of the principal deities. In order to understand their
functions, it is necessary to state that the deities residing in the House
of Myths have particular charge of the religious winter ceremonial of the
796 Bella Coola which is called kō'siut, and which corresponds to the ts'ētsa'eqa
[515] of the Kwakiutl. I have described this ceremonial, and its importance in
the social life of the Kwakiutl, in another paper.[2] The kō'siut is of equal
importance to an understanding of the social life and mythology of the
Bella Coola. It is sufficient to say at this place that the ceremonials per-
formed during the kō'siut are mostly dramatic representations of myths
[532] referring to the various deities, particularly to those of the House of Myths:
therefore masks representing these deities are used in the ceremonials.
Plates VII to XII[3] show a series of these masks. Figs. 1, 2, and 4 (Plate VII)
are SEnx, ALk'unta'm, and SnōLk'ulx·a'ls. The functions of many of the
575 inferior deities seem to refer solely to the kō'siut. These deities and their
776 functions are as follows: Slx·sek·lal'x· (Plate VII, Fig. 6) ordains the death
of man and animals. According to one statement that I received, there are
four deities of this name in the House of Myths. It is his particular duty
to kill those who transgress the laws of the kō'siut. This deity is men-
tioned by Jacobsen, who calls him Sek-selk Kallal.[4] Nusnē'neq'als (Plate
VII, Fig. 7), or the Snēnē'lq of the House of Myths, sits by himself in one

[113]

[1] Verhandlungen der Berliner Gesellschaft für Anthropologie, Ethnologie und Urgeschichte, 1894, p. 995.
[2] Report of the U. S. National Museum, 1895, pp. 311–738.
[3] Drawings by Mr. Rudolph Weber.
[4] Verhandlungen der Berliner Gesellschaft für Anthropologie, Ethnologie und Urgeschichte, 1891, p. 318.

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the middle of the water, the barnacles and worms bit her. She jumped up, and the canoe capsized. The birds swam ashore. After a short time the barnacles and sea-worms came ashore too. They looked very stout, because they had eaten the bear. Then the youth said to the girl, "There are two trails here,—one leading to the left, the other to the right. You follow the one, I will follow the other. If the trails meet, we will marry; if they do not, we here separate forever. They started, and after a while met each other. Then the youth married the girl. (Mask of the Bear, Plate X, Fig. 12.)[1]

VI.

It is necessary to make a few remarks on the relation of the ceremonials of the Bella Coola Indians to their mythology. I have not seen any of their ceremonials, and my descriptions are based on inquiries, and upon the accounts published by Fillip and Adrian Jacobsen.

The Bella Coola have two ceremonials,—the sisau'k· and the kŏ'siut, which correspond to the Laŏ'laxa and the ts'ētsa'eqa of the Kwakiutl. I have described these ceremonials fully in another paper.[2] The sisau'k· ceremonials are mostly dramatic representations illustrating the clan legends, some of which have been recorded in Chap. IV, while the kŏ'siut ceremonials are dramatic representations of the initiation of members of various clans into certain secret societies. Among these, the Cannibal Society, the Society of the Laughers, and the Society of the Throwers, are the most important. These are called by the Bella Coola the ʟlaxŏ'ʟɛla, Olx, and Da'tia. I described on pp. 34, 35, the spirits presiding over the two first-named societies. The information which I obtained on these points is perfectly clear and consistent. I cannot quite reconcile the explanations given by A. and F. Jacobsen to the accounts which I received. It seems that their accounts do not clearly distinguish between the opinions held by various tribes. In the article above referred to, I described fully the opinions held by the Kwakiutl in regard to the origin of their Cannibal Society. They believe that a spirit called Baxbakualanuxsi'waē initiates the Cannibals. He is represented as having an enormous black head with dilated nostrils and large mouth. I have made frequent inquiries among the Bella Coola, but received the uniform answer that this being does not initiate their Cannibals. It is not impossible that a few families may have adopted this tradition from the Kwakiutl tribes, but I have not been able to find it among the Bella Coola. Jacobsen maintains that Baxbakualanuxsi'waē is the particular spirit of the Cannibal among the Bella Coola, and brings forward the well-known

[1] Additional legends of the Bella Coola have been published in the publications quoted on pp. 16, 17.

[2] Annual Report of the U. S. National Museum for 1895, pp. 311–738.

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tradition of the Awī'k·'enōx as an explanation of the ceremonial. The only modification which I note in this tradition is that the Cannibal's wife is described as sucking out through their ears the brains of children,—an incident which I heard related of the mother of Aɬk'untā'm.[1] He calls him "Beck-Beck-Kvalanit, and in the Bella Coola dialect, Pāh-Pāh Kualanusiva." This word is decidedly of Kwakiutl origin, meaning "the one who eats human flesh at the mouth of the river (or at the north end of the world)." Neither have I been able to find any mask representing this being among the Bella Coola tribe. The masks which they use in connection with the Cannibal ceremony are of quite a different character (Plate XII, Figs. 1-8). I am the more inclined to think that Mr. Jacobsen did not clearly distinguish between the customs and traditions of various tribes, since he introduces "Ganikilla Ko" (Qā'nig·ilak·) in the traditions of the Bella Coola, while it is distinctively a legend of the Kwakiutl tribes of the extreme northwest of Vancouver Island. Jacobsen does not distinguish clearly between the sisau'k· and the kū'siut, stating that the kū'siut dances are performed during the sisau'k· in the same way as, among the Kwakiutl, a ʟaō'laxa may be celebrated during the ts'ē'ts'aēqa. This may be, but theoretically the two ceremonials must be considered entirely distinct. According to the information which I received, sisau'k· dances may be held in summer, in which case the kū'siut could not possibly form part of the sisau'k· ceremonial. When, on the other hand, the sisau'k· takes place during the kū'siut period, it would naturally be accompanied by kū'siut dances.

As stated before, the sisau'k· is a ceremonial in which the legend of the clan is illustrated by means of dramatic performances. At the same time valuable presents are distributed among the guests who are invited to witness the ceremonial. The value of the gifts amounts often to several thousand dollars. At this time the family legend is told in general outlines, but the details of the legend are kept a secret, and are transmitted only to those who are initiated in the sisau'k· of the clan. It seems that we must consider the transmission of the sisau'k· legend in the following manner: At any given time it is the property of the chief of the family, who, at the time of the celebration, transfers his rights to his successor, generally to his son. The full tradition is kept secret by the owner. It seems that there is a close analogy between the conditions prevailing in the northwest and those found among the southwestern Indians, among whom certain priests are guardians of traditions. Among the tribes of the northwest coast the chief of a family is the guardian and owner of the family tradition, while among the southwestern tribes the priest is the guardian of the tradition belonging to a clan or to a fraternity. My impression is, however, that among the northwestern

[1] Verhandlungen der Berliner Gesellschaft für Anthropologie, Ethnologie und Urgeschichte, 1891, p. 394.
[2] *Ibid.*, 1894, p. 890.

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Indians the tradition is considered much more clearly the property of the person who has it in charge than it is among the southwestern Indians. A description of the sisau'k· ceremonial has been given by Jacobsen in the paper above referred to.[1]

A clan legend which is illustrated in the sisau'k· ceremonial is called by the Bella Coola "Sɛmsma" or "Smā'yusta." These traditions are the exclusive property of each clan. The laws according to which they descend from generation to generation differ from the laws prevailing among the other Coast tribes. The inhabitants of each Bella Coola village are not subdivided into clans, gentes, or septs; but each village community forms a unit, and possesses the same tradition. In order to keep the tradition in the tribe, the law requires that no person shall marry outside of his own village community. Thus the clan tradition is kept the exclusive property of the village community by means of endogamy. I have made very careful inquiries in regard to this point, and all the old men make substantially the same statement. Even marriages among near relatives are permitted;* and although marriages of people who are distantly related, or not related at all, are preferred, it even happens that cousins marry, or that an uncle marries his niece, in order to keep the clan tradition from being acquired by another village community. It seems, however, that, owing to the influence of the Coast tribes, the endogamic system has begun to give way to an exogamic system. Powerful and wealthy chiefs marry outside of their own village community, in order to secure an additional clan legend through marriage. This new system agrees with the one prevalent among the Kwakiutl tribes.

The kū'siut, as stated before, is a religious ceremony in which all the deities of heaven are personified. The members of various clans are initiated according to their clan traditions; but the same societies and the same deities appear in the traditions of all the various clans. From what little I have been able to learn, it seems that there is an elaborate opening of the whole ceremonial, corresponding to the opening of the ceremonial among the Kwakiutl.[2] I received the following description of the opening ceremony:—

The person who invites to the kū'siut, that is to say, the man whose son is to be initiated into one of the secret societies according to the tradition of his clan, requests a person who is called E'xēm to invite the nine brothers and their sister, who reside in the House of Myths, and in whose charge the kū'siut is placed. The names of the brothers are Xēmxēmalā'oɬla, Xē'mtsiwa, Ōmq'ōmkī'lik·a, Q'ō'mtsiwa, Aimalā'ōɬla, Aī'umkī'lik·a, K·lē'lilas, Q'ulaxa'wa, Āt'mak·; and that of their sister, L'ētsa'apleɬana (see p. 33). In the rear of the house an elevated room is prepared for E'xēm, in which he lies down. He is covered with rings made of red cedar-bark. For four days he stays

[1] Vmz, 1895, pp. 1-23.

[2] I have described this fully in the Annual Report of the U. S. National Museum for 1895, pp. 300 ff.

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in this room. Then the host sends messengers to invite the people. They take staffs, and tie red cedar-bark round their heads, and go from house to house, singing, "Nayaxdēts wa nōnōsp'otstsē' he!" ("I wish to find some one who understands the winter ceremonial.") This they repeat in every house. Then they return to the host's house, who sends them out again, ordering them to sing, "Qōts'ak·ım totēts wa nōnōsp'otstsē' he!" ("I wish the dancers would wash their hands.") Again they return to his house. They are sent out once more with the message, "Xoōtsak·ımtoōts wa nōnōsp'otstsē' he!" ("I wish the dancers would make their hands tremble.") They return once more to the chief's house, and are sent out again with the message, "Tapamak·tēts wa nōnōsp'otstsē' he!" ("I want the dancers to look at their hands.") Now the dancers are ready, and come to the house. Then Ē'xēm arises and dresses. He puts on a head-dress of birds' skins, ornamented with red cedar-bark. He is accompanied by women. Another man, who is called Nusx·ia'mı., adorns himself with red cedar-bark. He carries in his right hand a small baton covered with red cedar-bark. In his left he carries a larger stick, on which he beats time with the small baton. He sits down, and now all the people enter. First of all, Ē'xēm comes in, accompanied by many women. Nusx·ia'mı. begins to sing and to beat time, and Ē'xēm shouts, "Ooo!" Ē'xēm walks around the fire, keeping it to his left, and shaking his bark. Before he begins the circuit, he gives four jumps near the door. Four times he goes round the fire, and every time he reaches the door he gives four jumps. As soon as he does so, Nusx·ia'mı. beats time slowly. When E'xēm has finished his dance, the people take him to a place near the door, and a woman sings near him. Nusx·ia'mı. and the people join her, then she dances her winter dance. Before she quite finishes, the people make her stop, and another woman begins her dance. Nusx·ia'mı. beats time, and the other people join his song. The people make her stop again. Thus a great many people perform their dances. Now Ē'xēm appears again, crying, "Ooo!" and Nusx·ia'mı. beats time. Again he jumps four times to the right and four times to the left when reaching the door. After this, two more men and two more women perform their dances. After this has been done twice, Ē'xēm stands near the door, looking upward, and says, "They are very near now." By this time the whole house is full of people. He goes around the house three times, dancing. Then he stays near the door, looking upward, saying all the time, "They are near by." When he reaches the door the fourth time, he cries, "They have arrived! Now they are here, dancing on the roof." Ē'xēm continues to dance in the house, in order to induce them to come down. The first to come down is Xēmxēmalā'ot.la, who stops at the rear of the house and sits down. Ē'xēm continues to dance, and the others enter in order. Ē'xēm stands near them and says, "Now I have placed

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575 796 them. Let the chief give them red cedar-bark." The people take small pieces of blankets, and sew red cedar-bark on to them in designs corresponding to the paintings on the faces of these deities, and they give these to the deities in order to appease them. Then they throw grease into the fire. During all this time É'xĕm stands in the rear of the house; and when a painting has been finished, the man who offers it to the deity shouts, "Xĕmxĕmalá'ōɬla t'aix·tau'!" ("This is Xĕmxĕmalá'ōɬla.") And É'xĕm sings, "Yayak·lamĕts'ĕk·a wa k'waltɛnai'x·aɬ t'aix· tai'ya; aɬt'aɬ'ō'mataxstŏs nusk·asiōtstani'x· asɛlkulatōtita'ya." As soon as he has finished his song, a loud noise is heard on the roof, as though a heavy stone were falling down. É'xĕm arises and performs a dance, while the noise of whistles is heard proceeding from him.

575 I am not familiar with the details of the ceremonial, and shall proceed to record the principal characteristics of the various societies. The Cannibal is initiated in the House of Myths by Bá'ɛxōɬla. I recorded above (p. 34) how a young man was initiated by this spirit, and how he was returned to his friends. The return of the Cannibal is accompanied by ceremonies similar [184] to those recorded in this tradition. It seems that the ceremonies of the Cannibals of various families are much alike, each having a tradition of its own referring to the initiation. It is believed that all the Cannibals, during their initiation, go up to the sky. I was told that on this journey they have to take human flesh along for food. It is said that in former times the chiefs held a council the night preceding the beginning of the ceremonies, and any one who wanted to show his liberality offered one of his slaves to be killed in order to serve as food for Bá'ɛxōɬla. The offer was accepted, and a [246] payment made for the slave. The latter was killed, and the members of the Bá'ɛxōɬla order devoured one-half of the body before the departure of the novice to the woods.

The spirit appears to the novice while he is in the woods, and takes him up to the House of Myths, where he is initiated. Early one morning he returns, and is heard outside of the houses. He has lost all his hair except a little in the median line of the head. It is believed that it has been torn off by the strong wind blowing in the higher regions. Some Cannibals do not devour human flesh, but tear dogs to pieces or devour raw salmon The 575 ceremonial consists in pacifying the Cannibal, and exorcising the spirit that 796 possesses him. This is the object of the·kū'siut ceremonial. After a Cannibal has returned, the people try to capture him. When he is first heard to approach, the speaker, whose face is painted black, and who wears a cedar-bark ring, and is covered with eagle-down, shouts, "Tix·ma'ts'ɛn tak·'axta'ɬiɬ tnaɬ'aɬ'ōtŏ'aɬ. P'alx·ĕxtsalatstɛnai' tix·ma'ts'ɛn tasiswalō'ɬiɬ t'aɬ'aiōtst'ai'!" ("Arise, it may be our Cannibal. Awake!") The Cannibal is accompanied by four assistants, who are called Aɬiɬpa, and who from time to time utter

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the cry, "Hoip!" which is intended to pacify the Cannibal. They wear masks (Plate XII, Figs. 4 and 5). The people try to throw a noose over his head; but he throws it off, refusing to be captured. Then the people shout, "Ya'i!" beating time rapidly. The Cannibal tears the ropes that hold him, and disappears. Then the people follow him, and search for him until they find him. As soon as they approach, he attacks them, but gradually he becomes quieter. Then the speaker (Alk°) invites the people to the dancing-house, saying, "Ip'a'nap kukusiau't!" That means, "Dance, dancers!" Now the Cannibal opens the door, accompanied by his assistants. He wears the mask shown in Plate XII, Fig. 3. At once a number of women arise, ready to surround him as soon as he enters the house. They are called ALAL'au'ɪ.ɪtemx°. The speaker, who holds a staff, arises and shouts, "Ô n ya'li-watimôtx Alqôlayak°ai's!" That means, "Act like a real Cannibal." The Cannibal utters his cry, "Hoaaa, hoaaa, hoaaa!" ending with a long deep growl. He stays in the doorway for a long time. Then he steps into the house, turns his left shoulder outward once, bites one man on the right-hand side of the house, and one on the left-hand side, and then performs his circuit of the fire, leaving the fire to his left. In dancing he holds his fists in front of his chest, one on each side. He moves in a stooping position, raising his feet very high. He dances for four nights, during which time the people try to pacify him by means of songs and dances. After he has first been induced to enter the house, he becomes quieter. Then he tells the people what he has seen during his absence, and the song-leader makes a song on the subject. The women do not learn about the events that took place during his absence until they hear the song. After four days the ceremony of exorcising the S'a'ɪ.psta (Plate XII, Figs. 6 and 7), the monster that possesses him, is performed. A large dish is ornamented with red cedar-bark; and the assistant of the S'a'ɪ.psta (Plate XII, Fig. 8), by means of incantations, makes the Cannibal vomit the snake, or the wolf, or the eagle, that possesses him. Then he is seen to carry the head of the animal under his left arm, while the body is seen in the rear, being held by his assistants. Then this animal is seen to vomit flesh and blood into the dish which has been prepared for the purpose. The Cannibal's assistants cover the body of the animal with down; while they cry from time to time, "Hoip!" Then the people beat time very rapidly, and suddenly the S'a'ɪ.psta has disappeared. The people beat time four times, and after this the Cannibal has become like an ordinary man. He walks around the fire, which he keeps to his right, and says, "Now Ba'ɛxoɪ.la has left me." The contents of the dish are thrown into the water, but the dish itself is burned in the dancing-house. It is supposed that it is thus conveyed to heaven. After the dish has been burned, the Cannibal does not dance any more. Then a bed is prepared for him in the rear of the house, in which he must stay for four days. After this, he is

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allowed to re-enter the houses; but before doing so for the first time, he must stop at the door and shout, "Wa, wa, wa!" Then he jumps over the threshold. Accompanied by many men, he is led, after four days more, to the river for final purification. He is pushed into the water, but struggles to free himself. He tries to duck his companions, and utters his cries. Finally he is led back. Then he weeps, because the spirit has left him entirely. The people beat time while he is going back to the house. Then he is offered a piece of salmon, which is placed on his throat, while the people shout, "Hoip, hoip!" The salmon is taken away again, and after some time he is allowed to take one bite. Then he must lie down. After the dancing season is ended, he is again allowed to eat in the same way as other people do. The piece of salmon that was placed on his throat is eaten by children as a protection against sickness. Finally a ceremony is performed which is called "taking the lip of the S'a't.psta out of the Cannibal's body." While this is being done, the people cry, "Hoip!" Then they throw the lip upon another Cannibal, who at once falls into an ecstasy. Then the shaman takes it back and throws it up towards the sky, where it disappears. The dish and the spoon that the Cannibal used during his ecstasy are destroyed. For four years he must wear a small ring of red cedar-bark, in summer as well as in winter.

The Ölx is also initiated in heaven by the being described before (p. 35). There are different traditions regarding his initiation among different clans. Some Ölx, during their performances, walk ropes which are stretched through the house. When he returns from his initiation, small whistles, called ĕai.'laxa, which imitate the voices of eagles, are heard outside of the houses. Then the Ölx enters in a state of ecstasy, scratching the people who assemble to hold him, and tearing their blankets. Finally the people succeed in placing a blanket over his head, and he begins to come to his senses. When he enters the house, the people beat time, then he teaches the chorus-leader a song. The mask worn by the Ölx is quite large, and characterized by a large nose (Plate XII, Fig. 9). He carries a dancing-club (Plate XII, Fig. 10), and rings made of red cedar-bark. He is accompanied by two assistants, who also wear masks.

VII.

We will now discuss the probable origin of the mythology described in the preceding pages. In order to do so, it is necessary to make a brief statement in regard to the social organization of the neighboring tribes. In another paper[1] I have fully discussed the considerable amount of borrowing that has taken place among the Coast tribes, and the relation of their

[1] Indianische Sagen von der nord-pacifischen Küste Amerikas, Berlin, 1895, pp. vi + 363.

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mythologies to those of the interior. It is unnecessary to revert to this subject here. The similarity of the Bella Coola legends to those of the other Coast tribes on the one hand, and to the traditions of the Athapascan tribes on the other, is evident.

It is, however, important to compare their social organization with that of the neighboring tribes, in order to gain a clearer understanding of the origin of their peculiar organization. As stated before, the Bella Coola are divided into village communities, which are organized on an endogamic basis. Each village community has its tradition, which is represented in certain ceremonies. The supernatural beings which play a part in these traditions are personified by certain dancers. Other Coast tribes have a much more complex organization. The Tlingit and Haida are divided into two clans, each of which is subdivided into a great many families, which, as it would seem, were originally village communities. This opinion is based on the fact that the names of many of the families must be translated as "inhabitants of such and such a place." The two clans are present in all the villages of the tribe, each family belonging to either one clan or the other. The Tsimshian have the same system, except that the number of clans is four instead of two. Each tribe is divided into families, which embrace the inhabitants of a certain region; but all the families of the whole tribe are classified according to the four clans. Among the Haida, Tlingit, and Tsimshian, descent is purely maternal; among the northern Kwakiutl tribes, conditions are somewhat different, according to observations made by Dr. Livingston Farrand. Here we have village communities which are subdivided according to four clans in the same way as those of the Tsimshian, but descent is not purely maternal. There is a strong preponderance of the latter form of descent, but parents are at liberty to place their children in either the paternal or maternal clan. The preponderance of maternal descent is, however, so strong, that from my previous occasional inquiries I drew the inference that descent was purely maternal.

Among the southern Kwakiutl tribes the families constituting a village community are subdivided into a number of clans, but each clan is confined to one village. We do not find a limited number of clans pervading the whole tribe, as we do among the northern tribes. An analysis of the social organization of this tribe has shown that the present organization has evidently developed from a previous simpler state, in which the tribe was divided into single village communities. The present more complex organization resulted from the amalgamation of various villages. Owing to the influence of the totemism of the northern tribes, each village community adopted a crest, which in course of time became the totem of the clan.[1] The Kwakiutl have a peculiar organization, which may be considered a transitional stage between

[1] "Social Organization and Secret Societies of the Kwakiutl Indians" (Report of the U. S. National Museum for 1895, p. 333).

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contradiction is inherent in all the mythologies of the North Pacific coast, they nowhere reach such a degree as among the Bella Coola; and I presume the fact that the traditions are kept secret by the various families accounts for this curious condition.

The prayers of the Bella Coola directed to Sɛnx or Ta'ata bear a remarkable resemblance to the prayers of the Tsimshian addressed to Laxha, the sky. In both tribes we find the idea that when the Sun wipes his face it will be clear weather, and man will be happy; consequently the prayer to the deity "to wipe his face" occurs quite often.

One of the most important customs that the Bella Coola borrowed from the Coast tribes is the kn'siut ceremonial, with which are connected the various secret societies, particularly the custom of ceremonial cannibalism. The ceremonies and the paraphernalia used by the Bella Coola and by the Kwakiutl are practically identical. I told above (p. 34) the legend explaining the origin of cannibalism. Among the Bella Bella and Kwakiutl, another tradition is told to explain the origin of this custom. The tradition tells of a spirit called Baxbakualanuxsr'waĕ, who lives in the forest, and who initiates the members of the Cannibal Society. The series of traditions clustering around this being differ fundamentally from those referring to the Cannibal Society of the Bella Coola. The custom has also spread to the Tsimshian, who say that the secret societies were introduced by a hunter who was taken into the inside of a cliff by a white bear. Inside he saw a house, in which the various societies were performing their ceremonies. It appears, therefore, that the same ritual which is practised by three distinct tribes is explained by three fundamentally distinct myths; and we must conclude that in this case the ritual is older than the myth,—that the latter has been invented in order to explain customs that were borrowed from foreign tribes, so that the ritual is the primary phenomenon, while the myth is secondary.[1]

These considerations explain some of the psychological motives for the development of certain traditions and myths, as well as the curious inconsistency of the clan traditions of the Bella Coola. They do not, however, explain the most fundamental characteristic of the traditions of the tribe. I pointed out in the third chapter of this paper, that, notwithstanding the numerous contradictions contained in family legends, the conception of the word and the functions of the various deities are so well defined that we must consider the mythology of this tribe vastly superior to that of the neighboring tribes. While the latter believe in a great many spirits which are not co-ordinated, we have here a system of deities. The existence of a systematic mythology among the Bella Coola proves that under favorable conditions the advance from the lower forms of beliefs to higher forms may be a very rapid one.

[1] See Report of the U. S. National Museum for 1895, pp. 60o ff.

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EXPLANATION OF PLATE XI.

*** Cross-hachure indicates black; vertical hachure, red; horizontal, blue; dots, orange; white, natural color of wood, except in cases where the whole mask is black.

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Fig. 1.—Mask representing the thunder-bird (front and profile). Black, red. Height, 11½ inches. Cat. No. 71133.

Fig. 2.—Mask representing ALXULÂ'TENUM (front and profile). Ornamented with red cedar-bark. Orange, blue. Height, 12 inches. Cat. No. 71137.

Fig. 3.—Mask representing the rabbit. Set with mountain-goat skin. Natural color, black. Height, 13 inches. Cat. No. 71132.

Fig. 4.—Mask representing the owl. Black, red. Height, 12 inches. Cat. No. 71131.

Fig. 5.—Mask representing LÂ'QOTS (the mountain). Natural color, black. Height, 19½ inches. Cat. No. 71134.

Fig. 6.—Mask representing the raindrop. On top of the mask is a long switch set with feathers, only the lower part of which is shown. Natural color, black. Height, 10 inches. Cat. No. 71135.

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Fig. 7.—Bird-shaped implement worn by a companion of the thunder-bird. It is filled with eagle-down. During the dance it is shaken, and the down flies out of the holes in the lower part of the implement and from the back. Length, 18 inches. Cat. No. 71139.

Fig. 8.—Mask representing the sea-monster K'TLX'TA. Red, blue, black. Height, 19 inches. Cat. No. 71138.

Fig. 9.—Mask representing the spirit LALAÏ'IL. Black, orange, set with bear-skin. Height, 9 inches. Cat. No. 71136.

Fig. 10.—Mask representing the hermaphrodite (front and profile). Natural color, red, black. Height, 11 inches. Cat. No. 71140.

[facing End Plate XI]

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Masks and Carving of the Bella Coola Indians.

[End Plate XI]

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every morning when the sun rises. He takes care that he rises properly. The first six of these deities are grouped in pairs, and are believed to paint their faces with designs representing moon, stars, and rainbow. In the kŭ'sint these deities make their appearance, and are represented by masks. Xē'mtsioa and Xēmxēmalà'oLa wear the design of the full moon, indicated on the mask of Xē'mtsioa by a double curved line in red and black, the black outside, passing over forehead, cheeks, and upper lip. Xēmxēmalà'oLa has a double curved line in red and black, the red outside, which passes over forehead, cheeks, and chin. Aiumkī'lik·a and Aiumalà'oLa wear the design of the crescent, drawn in red and black, with differences similar to those between the first and second masks. The fifth Q'ōmq'ōmkī'lik·a and Q'ō'mtsioa have designs representing stars, both wearing the same style of mask. The seventh is Qula'xawa, whose face represents the blossom of a salmon-berry bush. The next in order, Kulē'lias (who wants to have blankets first), wears the design of the rainbow in black and blue. The ninth, At'amā'k, wears on the head a mask representing a kingfisher, and is clothed in a bird-skin blanket. The last of the series is a woman called L'ē'tsā'aplēLāna (the eater), the sister of the others. Her face is painted with the design of a bladder filled with grease. She figures in several legends as stealing provisions and pursued by the people whom she has robbed.

The sisau'k·, which is danced at potlatches and other festivals of the clans, is presided over by a being that lives in the sun. A man who had gone out hunting met the sisau'k· and was instructed by him in the secrets of the dance. When he returned, he asked the people to clean their houses and to strew them with clean sand before he consented to enter. Then he danced the sisau'k· and told the people what he had seen. He said that the being had commanded them to perform this dance and to adorn themselves when dancing with carved headdresses with trails of ermine skins, and to swing carved rattles. The man, later on, returned to the sun. Ever since that time the Bī'lxula dance the sisau'k·. Besides this, it is stated that the raven gave each clan its secrets. Each clan has its peculiar carvings, which are used in the sisau'k· only, and are otherwise kept a profound secret, i. e., they are the sacred possessions of each clan. All clans, however, wear the beautiful carved headdresses and use the raven rattles, regardless of the carving they represent. Every time the sacred objects of a clan are shown to the people a potlatch is given. The sacred objects, although the property of the various clans, must nevertheless be acquired by each individual—that is to say, every free person has the right to acquire a certain group of carvings and names, according to the clan to which he or she belongs. Slaves and slaves' children, also illegitimate children, can not become sisau'k·. A person can not take a new carving, but must wait until it is given to him by his relatives—father, mother, or elder brother. Nusk'ălu'sta, the Indian, to whom I

8:Boas E-5 (1886-ca. 1890)1897
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the middle of which objects a human hair is tied. If this object strikes the offender, he will fall sick. Blood is believed to collect in his stomach, and if it so happens that he vomits this blood, and with it the disease-producing object, he will recover, and is not molested any further. The masks (not the whistles and other ornaments) used in the kā'nut are burnt immediately at the close of each dancing season. Novices must wear a necklace of red cedar bark over their blankets for a whole year. The masks used in the dances represent mythical personages, and the dances are pantomimic representations of myths. Among others, the thunder bird and his servant, ALEXĀ'XTMUM (who wears a mask with red and blue stripes over the whole face from the right-hand upper side to the left-hand lower side, and carries a staff with red and blue spiral lines), appear in the dances. Prominent masks are also Xē'mtsēos and his brothers and his sisters; Mamamalā'nix and his fellows, the raven and the nuxnō'mts, and many others.[1]

Fig. 391.
HEADDRESS OF ALEXĀ'.
Haida.
Cat. No. 60301, U. S. N. M. Collected by J. G. Swan.

THE TSIMSHIAN, NĪSQA', HAIDA, AND TLINGIT.

The tribes of this group learned the ceremonial avowedly from the HŌ'iltsuq. Although I have not witnessed any part of their ceremonials, the descriptions which I received bring out with sufficient clearness its similarities to the winter ceremonial of the Kwakiutl. The ceremonials seem to be almost identical among all these tribes. It is most complete among the southwestern Tsimshian tribes, particularly the G·ītxsā'la, but has been adopted by all the tribes of the coast. It is said that it reached the Haida not more than a hundred years ago.

I will tell here what I learned from the Nisqa'. They have six societies, which rank in the following order: The emkalai'l, mō'ila', LĒLē'm, dīala', nanōxō'l, hēnasa'l, the last being the highest. The emkalai'l is really not confined to the winter ceremonial, but is obtained when a person acquires the first guardian spirit of his clan and performs the ceremony belonging to this event. The tradition of the origin of these ceremonies localizes the events at Bellabella, and it

[1] See "Indianerleben Sagen von der Nord-Pacificküste Ältere Amerikas," pages 241, by F. Boas.